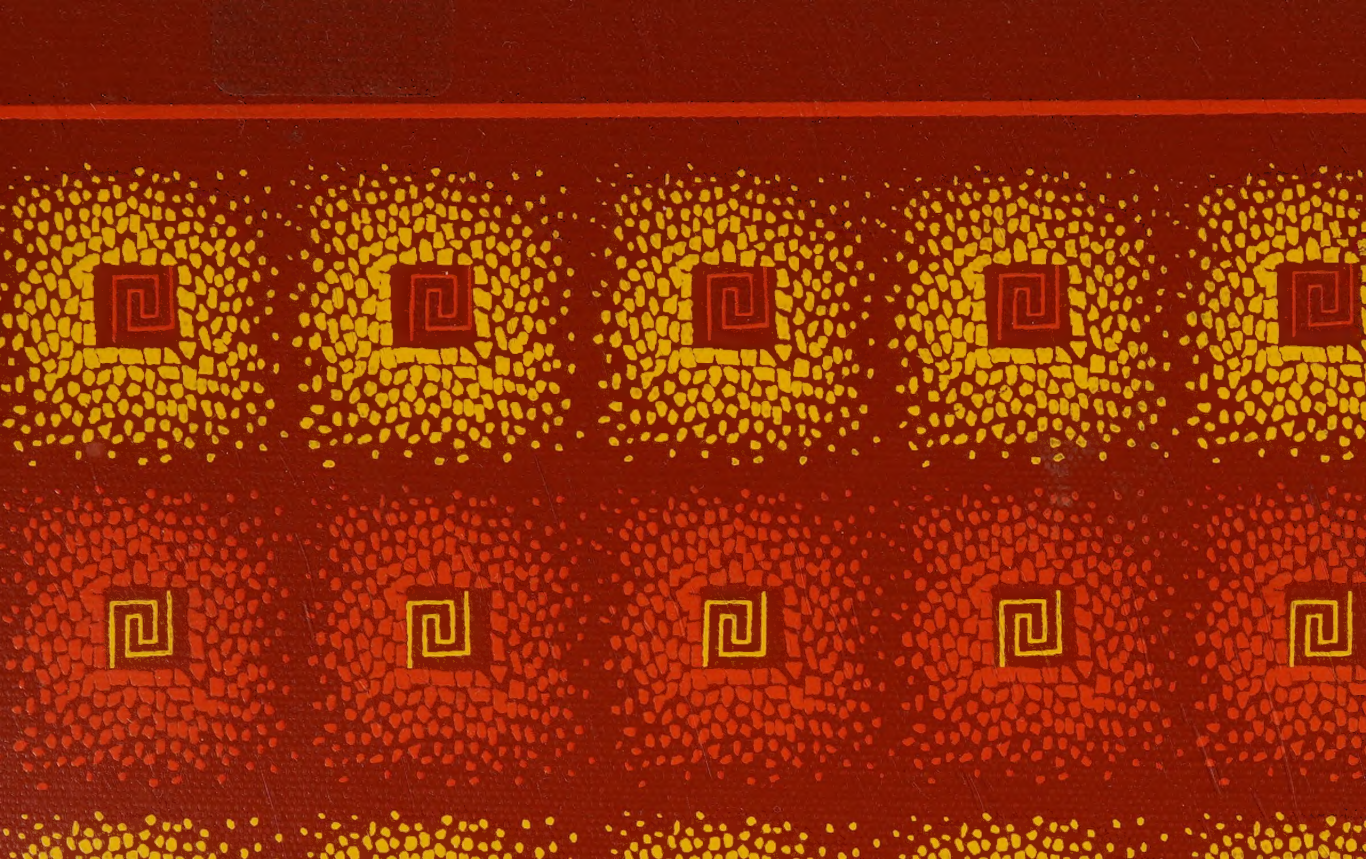


STATE LIBRARY
SALEM, OREGON

DISCARD

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2025

https://archive.org/details/bwb_S0-BPN-408

FLEURS-DE-LYS

FLEURS-DE-LYS

A BOOK OF FRENCH POETRY FREELY TRANSLATED INTO ENGLISH VERSE WITH AN INTRODUCTION AND NOTES

BY

WILFRID THORLEY

Author of "Confessional and other Poems," 1911;
"Paul Verlaine," 1914

BOSTON & NEW YORK

HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

1920

Pierce Library
Eastern Oregon University
WITHDRAWN
From EOU Library
La Grande, OR 97850

Printed in Great Britain

1920. 336p. $2.

French poetry from the twelfth century to the present time translate into verses which are fluent and often happily reflect the spirit of thei time. The older ones are done into the English of the ballads. Ar rangement is alphabetical by authors, so that those interested can fol low the trend of development with the aid of the historical essay o the introduction and the brief explanatory and biographical notes. Fif ty-four authors are represented; more are of the earlier periods and les of the later period than in Boni (p. 337) Interesting in being the trans lations of one man, while Boni is a collection of the work of many The two collections duplicate forty poets but very few poems.

841 French poetry—Collections 20–26552/

Verball Translators sticke to the bare Text
Sometimes so close, the Reader is perplext,
Finding the words, to finde the wit that sprung
From the first writer in his native tongue.
The spirit of an Author being fled,
His naked lines looke like a body dead.

AURELIAN TOWNSHEND
Circa 1620

L'essentiel, dans une version étrangère d'une poème, n'est pas l'exactitude des détails, mais la vérité de l'ensemble, et cette vérité ne peut se rencontrer que par le fait d'une sorte de création nouvelle par des moyens nouveaux.

ALBERT MOCKEL
1916

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE OF CONTENTS

Page

INTRODUCTION 1

BOOK I

ANONYMOUS. (12th Century)
1. The Twa Systres 35

GUIOT DE DIJON (13th Century)
2. The Laye of the Ladye of Fael 36

JEHANNOT DE LESCUREL (14th Century)
3. Ballade 37

JEAN FROISSART (1337–1410)
4. Rondeau of hys Ladye 38
5. Rondeau of Fare-well 39

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS (1340–1410)
6. Ballade of Pentecost 39
7. Rondeau of Soldierhood 40

CHRISTINE DE PISAN (1363–1430)
8. Ballade of Sprynge-tyme 41
9. Rondeau of Secret Sorrowe 42

ANONYMOUS (15th Century)
10. Folk Song : "What shall I doe if love me leave ?" 42

CHARLES D'ORLÉANS (1391–1465)
11. Ballade : "O praye for peace, sweet mayde Marie" 43
12. Rondeau : "Howe comely hath Godde made her be" 45
13. Rondeau : "Myne only love, my joye, my boone" 45
14. Ballade : "Within the forest of sadde wearinesse" 46
15. Rondeau : "Tyme hath throwne downe the robe he bare" 47
16. Rondeau : "Salute for me the fellowe-ship" 47

FRANÇOIS VILLON (1431– ?)
17. From the Greater Testament : "I knowe full well I am noe saynte" 48
18. The Ballade of Lovely Ladyes of Long Agoe 49

FRANÇOIS VILLON (continued) Page
19. From the Greater Testament : " I doe bemoan my youthful sinne " 50
20. From the Greater Testament : " I give my bodye untoe her that gatte 51
21. Ballade made for his Mother that she mighte praye toe Our Ladye 52
22 Epitaph in ballade form written in expectation of being hanged 53
23. His owne Epitaph 54
MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS (1487–1558)
24. Of hys Ladye 55
MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE (1492–1549)
25. Dizain to Clément Marot 56
CLÉMENT MAROT (1495–1544)
26. Dizain in answer to Marguerite of Navarre 56
27. Of the Abbot and his Valet 57
28. Song : " What evil woes dull Hate maye breede " 57
29. Song : " He who with a random eye " 58
30. Ballade of Maye and of Virtue 58
CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN (1514–1589)
31. Happinesse 59

BOOK II

PONTUS DE TYARD (1521–1603)
32. Sonnet : " Sleepe, sire of rest and eke of dreams the sire " 63
PIERRE DE RONSARD (1524–1585)
33. Sonnet : " Nowe that the skiey space, the solid claye " 63
34. Sonnet : " I send to thee a posie gatheréd " 64
35. Sonnet : " You spiky gorse, you hollye thorn-beset " 65
36. Sonnet : " On my return to thee (Ah me ! my woe) " 65
37. Sonnet : " Since she is frostye as the Winter aire " 66
38. Sonnet : " When thou art old and bye the fire alone " 66
39. To Cassandra : " O mayde more tender yet " 67
40. Sonnet : " Here is the wood whereof my angel sweete " 69
41. Sonnet : " Not sunrise that doth sette the rose a-fire " 69
42. Sonnet : " As you maye see upon the stem in Maye " 70
43. On his choice of a Grave : " Caves, and streames that downward slyde " 70

JOACHIM DU BELLAY (1525–1560) Page
44 Sonnet : "If Lyfe's full span be but a daye that's sped" 73
45. Sonnet : "Stranger that seekest Rome in Rome, and nought" 74
46. Sonnet : "Not the wild wrath of flames that skyward shoot" 74
47. Sonnet : "The Berecynthian in her chariot" 75
48. Sonnet : "Sleepe that most heavenlye of all boones is deemed" 75
49. Sonnet : "When I could taste (as nowe no more maye be)" 76
50. A Thresher of Wheat to the Wyndes 77
51. Sonnet : "I hate the Florentines' pelf-huntynge race" 77
52. Sonnet : "Happie is he that from a faire voyáge" 78
LOUISE LABÉ (1526–1566)
53. Sonnet : "While that myne eyes with woeful teares doe flood" 78
54. Sonnet : "Scarce on my yieldynge pillowe doe I bend" 79
REMI BELLEAU (1528–1577)
55. April 80
ESTIENNE PASQUIER (1529–1615)
56. Sonnet : "Thy sighte denied when deare to me" 83
OLIVIER DE MAGNY (1530–1559)
57. Sonnet : "Happye the man beyonde the city's hail" 83
ESTIENNE JODELLE (1532–1573)
58. Sonnet : "As one astraye within the forest deepe" 84
JEAN-ANTOINE DE BAÏF (1532–1589)
59. Spring Song : "Idle Winter's colde" 85
GUY DE TOURS (?)
60. Sonnet : "I have noe eyes save when on her I looke" 87
JEAN DOUBLET (?)
61. Song : "Meseemeth that soe manye shafts be notte" 87
JEAN PASSERAT (1534–1602)
62. Ode for the Fyrst of Maye 88
63. Villanelle : "I have lost my turtle fleet" 89
64. On the Death of Thulène the Kynge's Jester 90
VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE (1535–1607)
65. Song : "Love be mute, but take thyne arc" 91
66. Sonnet : "O pleasant wynde whose balmye breath doth fill" 91

CONTENTS

	Page
GUILLAUME DU BARTAS (1544–1590)	
67. The Pyrenees	92
PHILIPPE DESPORTES (1546–1606)	
68. Villanelle : " Rosette, because I stayed awaye "	93
69. Of a Fountayne	94
70. On the Death of Diana	94
CATHERINE DES ROCHES (1550–1587)	
71. Quatrain on Achilles	95
THÉODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ (1551–1630)	
72. Sonnet to the Kynge	95

BOOK III

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE (1555–1628)	
73. Consolation to M. de Périer	99
74. On the Death of his Son	100
MADEMOISELLE DE GOURNAY (1566–1645)	
75. Quatrain on a Picture of Joan of Arc	101
MATHURIN RÉGNIER (1573–1613)	
76. Stanzas	101
77. A Confession in brief	102
78. His own Epitaph	104
FRANÇOIS MAYNARD (1582–1642)	
79. " Howe faire a destiny 'twould be "	104
80. Epitaph	104
THÉOPHILE DE VIAU (1590–1626)	
81. The Boatmen	105
MARC-ANTOINE DE SAINT-AMANT (1594–1661)	
82. The Rising Sun	106
DENIS SANGUIN DE SAINT-PAVIN (1595–1670)	
83. Epigram	107
VINCENT VOITURE (1598–1648)	
84. Rondeau : " In good plain French "	108
PIERRE CORNEILLE (1606–1684)	
85. Stanzas to the Marquise	108
PAUL SCARRON (1610–1660)	
86. His own Epitaph	110
ISAAC DE BENSERADE (1612–1691)	
87. For Madame	110
JEAN DE LA FONTAINE (1621–1695)	
88. The Grasshopper and the Ant	111
89. The Rat who withdrew from the World	112
90. The Donkey loaded with Relics	113

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE (continued) Page
91. The Oak and the Reed 113
92. The Ass clothed in the Lion's Skin 114
JEAN-BAPTISTE POQUELIN DE MOLIÈRE (1622–1673)
93. To Monsieur Le Vayer on the Death of his Son 115
PHILIPPE QUINAULT (1635–1688)
94. The Song of Pluto 116
JEAN RACINE (1639–1699)
95. Hymn translated from the Roman Breviary 117
GUILLAUME AMFRYE, ABBÉ DE CHAULIEU (1639–1720)
96. To the Solitude of Fontenay 118
CHARLES RIVIÈRE DU FRESNY (1648–1724)
97. The Next Days 119
JEAN-BAPTISTE ROUSSEAU (1670–1741)
98. Love 120
FRANCOIS-MARIE AROUET DE VOLTAIRE (1694–1778)
99. To Madame Lullin 120
100. To M. Grétry 122
101. For a Statue of Love 122
102. On Jean Fréron 122
PONCE-DENIS ECOUCHARD LEBRUN (1729–1807)
103. Dialogue between a poor Poet and the Author 122
JEAN-FRANÇOIS DUCIS (1733–1816)
104. To my Brook 123
EVARISTE DE PARNY (1754–1801)
105. On the Death of a Young Girl 124
ANDRÉ CHÉNIER (1762–1794)
106. A Young Man 125
107. To Chromis 125
108. Clytie 126
109. The Flute 126
110. The Nymph asleep 127
111. The Heifer 127
112. The Young Captive 127
MARIE-JOSEPH CHÉNIER (1764–1811)
113. Hymn : "Source of all truth, blasphemed by every liar" 129
ANTOINE-VINCENT ARNAULT (1766–1834)
114. The Dead Leaf 130

BOOK IV

PIERRE-JEAN DE BÉRANGER (1780–1857) Page

115. The Swallows 133
116. Vile Spring! 134

MARCELINE DESBORDES-VALMORE (1786–1859)

117 The Roses of Saadi 135

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE (1790–1869)

118. The Lake 136
119. The Butterfly 138
120. Memory and Hope 139
121. The West 140

ÉMILE DESCHAMPS (1791–1871)

122. Do not believe 141
123. The Unknown 142

ALFRED DE VIGNY (1797–1863)

124. The Snow 143
125. The Shepherd's Hut 144
126. The Sound of the Horn 147

VICTOR HUGO (1802–1885)

127. The Song of the Prow-Gilders 149
128. Song : "Toward your scented garden, Sweet" 152
129. "Since from thy brimming chalice . . ." 152
130. Guitar Song 153
131. The Vision 156
132. Childhood 156
133. June Nights 157
134. The Sleeper's Prayer 157
135. The Grave and the Rose 158
136. "I will set out to-morrow . . ." 158
137. "O France, when thou art prone and bound" 159
138. The Children of the Poor 160
139. The Sower 161
140. The Bridge 162
141. Wintry Weather 163
142. The Swallow's Nest 163
143. On the Dunes 165
144. The Colossus of Rhodes 167

JULIEN-AUGUSTE-PELAGE BRIZEUX (1803–1858)

145. The Nest 167
146. The Night of the Dead 168

EVARISTE BOULAY-PATY (1804–1864)

147. The Bout 169

CHARLES-AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE (1804–1869) Page
148. Sonnet : "Sleepless upon my bed, my spirit's force" 170
AUGUSTE BARBIER (1805–1882)
149. The Idol 171
150. Michael Angelo 171
FELIX ARVERS (1806–1850)
151. Sonnet : "My soul doth grope, a darkened way I go" 172
GERARD DE NERVAL (1808–1855)
152. The Glorified 173
153. Fantasy 173
154. Sonnet : "Free-thinker ! dost thou deem that only man" 174
155. El Desdichado 175
ALFRED DE MUSSET (1810–1857)
156. Ballad to the Moon 175
157. "Pale star of evening . . ." 179
158. Song : "Brave knight that to the war doth go" 180
159. On a Dead Girl 180
160. The Muse's Wooing 182
161. Consolation 182
162. Sorrow 183
163. Fortunio's Song 184
164. Song : "When men do find upon a day" 185
THÉOPHILE GAUTIER (1811–1872)
165. Terza Rima 185
166. Boat Song 187
167. Art 188
168. The Cloud 190
169. Song : "The butterflies that are the snow's own hue" 191

BOOK V

VICTOR DE LAPRADE (1812–1883)
170. The Summits 195
LOUISE ACKERMANN (1813–1890)
171. Immortal Love 196
JOSÉPHIN SOULARY (1815–1891)
172. The Two Roses 197
173. Vain Dreams 197
174. The Scarecrow 198
LECONTE DE LISLE (1818–1894)
175. The Ravine of Saint-Gilles 199
176. Hialmar's Heart 201

LECONTE DE LISLE (continued) Page
177. The Spring 203
178. Night 204
179. Tre Fila d'Oro 205
180. The Black Panther 206
181. The Showmen 207
182. After a Thousand Years 208
183. The Lion's Death 209
184. A Festival 209
185. Cameo 210
186. The Supreme Consummation 211
187. Noon 211
CHARLES BAUDELAIRE (1821–1867)
188. Beauty 214
189. The Giantess 214
190. Twilit Harmony 215
191. My Former Life 215
192. The Pit 216
193. Hymn 217
194. Exotic Perfume 217
195. The Dead Mistress 218
196. Sin 218
197. Self-communing 219
198. Death 219
HENRI MURGER (1822–1861)
199. Memories 220
LOUIS BOUILHET (1822–1869)
200. Spring 221
LOUIS MÉNARD (1822–1901)
201. Stoicism 222
THÉODORE DE BANVILLE (1823–1891)
202. Ballade of the Forest Haunters 223
203. To the Font-Georges 224
204. To Théophile Gautier 227
205. "We'll go no more the woodland way . . . " 228
EUGÈNE MANUEL (1823–1901)
206. The Cradle 229
ANDRÉ THEURIET (1833–1907)
207. The Vine in Blossom 229
ARMAND SILVESTRE (1837–1901)
208. The Venus of Milo 231
209. Immortality 232
210. Prometheus 232
LÉON DIERX (1838–1912)
211. October Evening 233
212. Winter Day 233

ACHILLE MILLIEN (1838–) Page
213. The Three Sisters 234
SULLY PRUDHOMME (1839–1907)
214. The Inheritor 235
215. The Stranger 235
216. Bodies and Souls 236
217. The Great Bear 237
218. Chains 237
219. Hymn to Desire 238
ÉMIL BLÉMONT (1839–)
220. The Fall of the Year 238
VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM (1840–1889)
221. Avowal 239
HENRI CAZALIS (1840–1909)
222. Storm in the Night 240
223. The Harps of David 241
224. For Ever 242

BOOK VI

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ (1842–1898)
225. Apparition 247
226. Wind from the Sea 247
JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA (1842–1905)
227. Centaurs' Flight 248
228. The Tepidarium 249
229. To a Triumpher 249
230. The Rose Window 250
231. On the Old Bridge 250
232. The Vision of Khem 251
233. Antique Coin 253
234. The Bath 253
235. Wind from the Sea 254
236. The Bed 254
FRANÇOIS COPPÉE (1842–1908)
237. The Ruined Heart 255
CATULLE MENDÈS (1842–1909)
238. Consentment 255
239. Exhortation 257
240. Soror Dolorosa 257
PAUL VERLAINE (1844–1896)
241. Sonnet : "God spake and said . . . " 258
242. "The sky above the roofing lies" 259
243. "O hearken the so gentle plaint" 259

PAUL VERLAINE (continued) Page
244. My Familiar Dream 260
245. Green 261
246. Autumn Song 262
247. "Ere thy soft ray be lost" 262
248. Nevermore 263
249. A Forgotten Tune 264
250. Sonnet: "All through the day down poured the traitorous flame" 264
TRISTAN CORBIÈRE (1845–1875)
251. Letter from Mexico 265
GEORGES BOUTELLEAU (1846–)
252. The Avenue 266
253. The Wild Doves 267
GABRIEL VICAIRE (1848–1900)
254. Dream Song 268
255. Poor Liza 269
AUGUSTE ANGELLIER (1848–1911)
256. Sonnet Dedicatory 272
257. Sonnet: "Thus shall we live our separate lives unknit" 273
JEAN RICHEPIN (1849–)
258. The Song of the Gypsy Boy 273
259. Proud Sonnet 274
260. The Song of the Begging Cripple 275
261. The Beggar's Look 276
LOUIS TIERCELIN (1849–)
262. Sunset at Kerazur 277

BOOK VII

ARTHUR RIMBAUD (1851–1891)
263. Sensation 281
GEORGES RODENBACH (1855–1898)
264. "In tiny townships . . ." 281
265. Gentleness of Evening 282
JEAN MORÉAS (1856–1910)
266. A Young Girl's Song 283
267. Elegy 283
268. "Cast down these lilies . . ." 285
HENRI-CHARLES READ (1857–1876)
269. "I think that God . . ." 285
EDMOND HARAUCOURT (1857–)
270. The Loveliest Verses 286

AUGUSTE GAUD (1857–) Page
271. The Song of the Rain 287

ALBERT SAMAIN (1858–1900)
272. "There sometimes come strange evenings . . ." 288
273. Autumn 290
274 A Viol's Plaint 290
275. Cleopatra 291
276. Vigil 292

ANATOLE LE BRAZ (1859–)
277. The Song of Ahes 292

CHARLES VAN LERBERGHE (1861–1907)
278. Offering to a Dead Friend 293

MAURICE MAETERLINCK (1862–)
279. The Seven Maids of Orlamonde 294

GRÉGOIRE LE ROY (1862–)
280. Granny spins 294

STUART MERRILL (1863–1915)
281. Easter Song 295
282. "My brow is pale upon thy knees" 296

HENRI DE RÉGNIER (1864–)
283. Apparition 297
284. The Secret 298
285. Experience 298
286. Odelette 299
287. On the Strand 300

FRANCIS VIELÉ-GRIFFIN (1864–)
288. Song 300

ANDRÉ FONTAINAS (1865–)
289. Sonnet: "Sea-road a-tremble where the dawn-light swoons" 301

ANDRÉ-FERDINAND HÉROLD (1865–)
290. Sonnet: "Belovéd, all the dust has turned to flower" 302
291. Sonnet: "Now with the black grape's blood the barrels flow" 302

ROBERT D'HUMIÈRES (1868–1915)
292. The Song of the Figure-Head 303

PAUL FORT (1872–)
293. "This Girl is dead" 304
294 "What joy when flute and violin . . ." 304

HENRY BATAILLE (1872–)
295. Eventimes 305

Page

ANDRÉ RIVOIRE (1872–)

296. "Pale and slow, in her summer's vesture so pale" 306

CAMILLE MAUCLAIR (1872–)

297. The Garth 307

298. Questioning 308

FERNAND GREGH (1873–)

299. "I have grieved too much . . ." 308

CHARLES GUÉRIN (1873–1907)

300. Out of the Deep 309

NOTES 311

INDEX OF AUTHORS 327

INDEX OF FIRST LINES 329

INTRODUCTION

I

GENERAL

IN a western suburb of London, at no great distance from the coal-yards contiguous to the railway sidings of Paddington Station, may be seen a house bearing this motto in large letters above its doorway : " Ce qui doit être sera." " What must be must," I rendered it on first passing, reading its message as that of a fatalist and stoic thinker. And then doubt assailed me. " What ought to be shall be," I varied it, at once turning its author into one not at all resigned to things as they are, but sworn heroically to make the right prevail. But further deliberation revealed the rightness of my first impression, for the second interpretation would need *devrait* in place of *doit* to justify it. This example, however, may stand as an illustration of the truth that, in translation, it is a small thing to know, etymologically, the literal equivalent of foreign words, the important thing being to understand their intention, and to render their effect in your own way. " Il s'est brûlé le cerveau " means " He blew out his brains," and to insist that *brûler* means *burn* is only to make nonsense of the phrase by suggesting that some one either worried himself into a brain-fever or worked himself into a passion.

This being so with a simple prose statement, the

matter is obviously ten times more intricate when we come to poetry, where subtleties of sound are to be reproduced and the sense preserved, while duly conforming to the tyrannous exigencies of rhyme and metre. Let it be granted, at once, that it cannot be done ; but, since the whole reason of this book is the determination to attempt it, let us see how best to guard against futility.

In Leoncavallo's well-known operetta "I Pagliacci" the strolling player invites the peasant rout to assemble for a performance *a venti tre ore*, the last word filling magnificently the swelling finale of the musical phrase to which it is wedded, and, by contrast with the meagre dignity of its bare meaning, achieving a fine effect of intentionally mock pomposity. In the English version of this the tenor is made to sing " at seven you're invited," and the translation is bad, not from any disparity of meaning, but because two hard dentals are made to replace a soft " r " which is hardly more than a *liaison* between two open vowels. And this is done to the great hurt of the singer and his hearers—who are in this case, surely, the only people whom such a version can concern. When we come to the translation of works of pure literature, and especially of poetry, the same difficulties persist, while the responsibilities of the translator are extended to a wider audience, and for more permanent reasons.

In the case of the interpretation of French, which is undoubtedly the foreign language best known among our countrymen, the apparent easiness of translation hides one of the greatest pitfalls, for we have filched from our Gallic cousins a good round hundred of common words which we now use to express meanings a world away from those of their native intention, or, conversely, we have kept the meaning which the

Norman gave them, but which the modern Frenchman has forgotten or differently applied. The English translator who should set down *grief*, *large*, *resume* or *spiritual* as equivalents for the like words when found in his French text would produce a most unpardonable parody of his original. In other cases, where words common to the two tongues have retained identity of meaning, they are sometimes enhaloed by poetic suggestion in the one while connoting no more than their bare prose meaning in the other, so that their retention in translation, however correct literally, would be no less of an outrage by reducing to a hireling's rank what should remain aloof and regal. It may, indeed, almost be taken as an axiom that words from a Latin or French source, so singularly apt for scientific exposition, from the exactness with which they define material substance or action, can never fitly be used in poetry, where words, to be effective, must carry us far beyond the limits of their dictionary schedule, and bear with them the redolence of all the dead lips that have ever breathed them. To discover why it is that *build* and *keep* may go to the stirring of feelings that *construct* and *preserve* could never help to enkindle, would lead us into questions of psychology and the relation between language and racial sentiment ; for the least cultured feel at once the incongruity of imported words when used in an appeal to those " simple, sensuous, and passionate " emotions that are at the bottom of all poetry. So that when the late Mr. John Payne, (to whose fine zeal and accomplishment all lovers of that splendid wastrel François Villon are for ever beholden), writes " but I desist," we are conscious at once of a dissonance which no plea of fidelity to the French " Je me désiste"

can altogether palliate. No version of poetry, however faithful, can be good which does not read like poetry : to reproduce a poet's precise wording is a very doubtful need, and in any case an impossible one ; to reproduce his effect may be done if we approach the task in prayer and fasting, steadily set on forgetting his actual words as soon as we have mastered their meaning and got the massed sound of them tyrannously resonant in our ears. The best translators of poetry are, indeed, those who are least scrupulous of fidelity in detail ; they slur over the untranslatable, and insinuate new words and turnings of the original thought that are so perfectly in tune with their originals as to render them far less haltingly than meticulous followers of the text. The classic example of the recasting of old matter in a new mould is, of course, Fitzgerald's rendering of the " Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám," where, according to competent witness, the imaginative insight of the translator gave a new lease of life to a work which, on its native merits, was of quite secondary rank in the immortal choirs.

The real task of a translator is that of re-creating, and unless he can bring to his original as much as he takes from it, he had far better leave it alone. To a strict scholar this definition of translation may appear to be just what translation is not ; but, though the makers of mere cribs have their uses, they are not such as concern permanent literature, nor do they help us at all to a relish of its savour.

As an illustration of my argument, I take a sonnet by Joséphin Soulary, the well-known " Rêves Ambitieux " :

> Si j'avais un arpent de sol, mont, val ou plaine,
> Avec un filet d'eau, torrent, source ou ruisseau,

J'y planterais un arbre, olivier, saule ou frêne,
J'y batirais un toit, chaume, tuile ou roseau.

Sur mon arbre, un doux nid, gramen, duvet ou laine,
Retiendrait un chanteur, pinson, merle ou moineau ;
Sous mon toit, un doux lit, hamac, natte ou berceau,
Retiendrait une enfant, blonde, brune ou châtaine.

Je ne veux qu'un arpent ; pour le mesurer mieux,
Je dirais à l'enfant la plus belle à mes yeux :
" Tiens-toi debout devant le soleil qui se lève ;

" Aussi loin que ton ombre ira sur le gazon,
Aussi loin je m'en vais tracer mon horizon "—
Tout bonheur que la main n'atteint pas n'est qu'un rêve.

It appears at once that the longer-syllabled line of the French sonnet has a lightness and speed of rhythm that can in no wise be rendered by the staid ten-syllabled line of the English sonnet-form, while the customary French pronunciation of words with a terminal *e*, (when sung to music or recited in verse), unconsciously harking back to the penultimate emphasis of their Italian forbears, gives to *plaine*, *frêne*, *laine*, *châtaine*, *lève*, and *rêve* an effect which is common to those rhymes in English known as double or feminine. Lastly, the sestet opens with an isolated couplet which cannot effectively be paralleled in the English sonnet-form, where such a pairing of rhymes is seldom met with save at the end. To sum up, we find that to give anything like a true echo of the poet's singing we must have (*a*) a longer line, (*b*) speedier movement, (*c*) an interspersion of feminine endings. We can hardly make these last rhyme as Soulary has done, for such terminals are scarcer in English, and if our lines were so yoked they would be sure to chafe noisily against the coupling. Nor will a right music be got by using the same number of syllables to each line, for English

lines are swayed by stress to a degree undreamt of in French prosody, and we cannot get lightness of movement without sharpness of accentuation.

Next we find that the sentiment to be expressed is the renunciation of all worldly pomp and wealth for the humbler but more perdurable joys of the hearth-stone and heaven's free air. To render *torrent, source ou ruisseau* in English would sound queerly, for we have not that habit of nice differentiation which is always dominant in the best French, and in poetry especially we prefer to hint the thing by its effect rather than to state it specifically. Again, how shall we get the effect of homeliness if we speak of planting an *olive-tree* in our imaginary domain? Would not such husbandry suggest to us the exotic and the sumptuary, known alone to the world that dawdles winter through on the Riviera, returning for the London season to the joys of the Row and the glories of a box at Covent Garden? What would the author have said had he been English? *Thorn-bush*, likely enough; for it is a tree as common with us as olives in Provence, and the staple of those hedgerows that are one of our most widespread joys. And then *enfant* cannot be rendered simply by *child*, for its accompanying adjectives will not reveal the sex as do the French ones: *lassie*, however, will do this for us, and bring with it the right homely accent. Here, then, is our version:

Had I but an acre of loam on hill or valley,
  Fed by a stream that fell or loitered by,
There I'd plant an ash-tree, a thorn-bush or a willow,
  There I'd build a low roof between me and the sky.
On my tree a soft nest, feather-lined or woolly,
  There should hold a singing-bird—sparrow, finch or merle;
Underneath my own roof, a bairnie in the cradle
  Garlanding the pillow with her brown or yellow curl.

All I want's an acre ; and so to measure rightly,
I would take the lassie bonniest to me ;
" Stand thou uprightly "—so should be my bidding—
" Front the rising sunbeam." So, surely should I see.
" Far as thy shade on the grassy levels printed,
Just so far my faring, no farther than the shade's "—
All the lure of bliss that's far beyond fulfilment
Holds no more for me than a fickle dream that fades.

And if these few precepts seem to have failed me in my own practice, I would still say with the preacher, " Do as I say, if not as I do," only bidding the translator bring a better skill to the exploit.

II

PARTICULAR

THIS much was written before the following collection had been achieved, and it soon became evident to the writer that he was giving but random heed to his own precepts. To take the first point, it is obvious that a rondeau, a ballade, or a villanelle cannot properly be rendered without fidelity to its original form. And despite the example given above, the same rule must generally hold good for the sonnet ; and he would be a bold man who should dare to render Heredia otherwise than in a sequence of eight and six. And where anything in the nature of a refrain appears (as in the stanzas by Samain towards the end of the collection) no version can hope to achieve a right effect without reproducing the premeditated monotony of the original recurrent lines.

Next, it is certainly true in many cases that words of foreign origin are more, rather than less, effective than those of home growth. *Furnace* is more apt

to suggest a spacious horror than *oven*, which calls up only a domestic and somewhat trivial image, though the words be in their root-meaning synonymous. In brief, everything depends upon the suggestion to be conveyed, the nearness or remoteness, whether in time or space, of the atmosphere, and the degree of intimacy or aloofness which the poet puts into the pitch of his voice.

Though my aim has not been to reproduce what has been often, (and always falsely), termed "a line-for-line rendering in the original metre," I must confess to having found it easier to achieve something that is nearer this misleading definition than the more valuable recasting prefigured above. And that is only another way of saying that it is easier to be a scholar than a poet, and a repetition of the disclaimer implied in my sub-title.

So much that is good, (at times unsurpassably so), has been done by Lang, Wyndham, Robertson and others in the past, and by Miss Margaret Jourdain, Mr. Eugene Mason and Mr. Arthur Symons among living workers, (not to mention the occasional triumphs of original poets from Spenser to Swinburne, or of those who have been content to gather from a single furrow of the poetic field), that the present collection must argue some temerity in its maker ; but it had never been attempted had not the difficulties of anthologizing the best versions by other hands been found so nearly insuperable as to lead to despair in the undertaking. Here is an attempt at a representative choice, but the judicious will see that the translator has done what he could rather than what he would, and has sometimes given better credit to the small singer than to the great one. The omission of Ronsard's "Mignonne, allons voir si la rose," Vigny's

"Cor," and Leconte de Lisle's "Elfes," (to cite but three among many missing masterpieces), is a tribute to their great qualities rather than a slighting of them. The high proportion of sonnets has seemed justified by the large output and high quality shown in this form throughout nearly the whole period since its introduction, (even Fontenelle writing a good one); for nothing could be more grotesquely untrue than the casual judgment given by the late William Sharp in his introduction to "Sonnets of this Century." But it may be legitimately considered a failing in that some numbers have won their places more *à titre de document* than by intrinsic worth, (either in their original form or in the version offered), and have no better plea for their inclusion. I am sorry for it, but hope that the short period of Lenten fare offered to readers by the products of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, (to which the consensus of cultivated opinion in France gives an importance which we cannot well understand), may only whet their appetites for the rich banquet of the last century. That this period occupies more than one-half of the book would be alone justified by the great names that figure in it; but an epoch of almost universal literacy, while diminishing the chance of our losing any "mute inglorious Milton," renders articulate, if not greater poets, certainly a greater number of them and a more diversified music. Of the work of nearly contemporary writers it can hardly be hoped that the choice here given will be generally considered quite representative; but it is so difficult to keep rightly informed and critically aloof amid the trumpeting and disparagement of rival clans whose activities seem only to bewilder the native doctors, that a mere foreigner may be forgiven for including frankly what happens

to appeal to him, and keeping a barred door whenever the originals seemed to belie their fame or baffle his understanding, or whenever, more happily effectual, he could make no approvable rendering of the beauty they brought him.

In this section, moreover, the copyrights of authors and their publishers have made impossible an unrestricted choice, (already hampered in respect of several Belgian authors by the German occupation of their country, which precluded all negotiation with them) ; but I am glad to acknowledge here the courtesy and kindness of MM. Anatole le Braz, André Fontainas, Paul Fort, Auguste Gaud, Fernand Gregh, André-Ferdinand Hérold, Camille Mauclair, Henri de Regnier, and Francis Vielé-Griffin, who have allowed me to print versions of their poems ; of Mr. Bernard Miall, the authorized English translator of the poems of M. Maeterlinck, and of his publishers, Messrs. Methuen, who confirm his leave to print my one version from the work of that author ; of M. Alphonse Lemerre for a like confirmation in respect of a poem by M. Gaud ; of M. Edmond Guérin, representing the late Charles Guérin ; of M. Albert Mockel, representing, (alone), the late Charles Van Lerberghe and, (jointly with M. Hérold), the late Stuart Merrill ; of Mlle. Louise Read, representing the late Charles Henri Read ; of Mme. Vve. Robert d'Humières, representing her late husband ; and, finally, of M. Alfred Valette, whose unstinting generosity has enabled me to represent a round score of the poets originally presented to the French public by the *Mercure de France.* The dates of first publication have been carefully collated, and it is believed that no piece here appearing lacks proper sanction ; but if, by inadvertence, I should still have taken " French leave," I trust that no un-

kindness may interpret it as an attempt to *filer à l'anglaise*—for I should esteem it an honour for my book to heal feuds rather than to hasten them, and to be a small sign of the sealing in fast friendship of two peoples now drawn closer in a great trial.

III

HISTORICAL

SAVE for a few numbers appearing as outriders to the procession, and in proof of its anticipation and due heralding, the following pages contain only versions of that poetry which in the widest sense can properly be said to belong to modern French Literature—to the literature, that is to say, which is definitely freed from the mediæval bondage both as regards the language employed and the imaged world in which it delights to move.

The two poets who inaugurate this period are in many ways typical of the two sharply distinguished classes into which men were then divided—the servitor, (as distinguished from the serf), and the overlord or patron. Charles d'Orléans, (1391–1465), the earlier of the two, (and at least a casual patron of the later and unthrifty one), was of the blood royal, and begot a child who became King of France as the twelfth Louis. Born of an Italian mother, the talented Valentine of Milan, he wholly lacked that implacability of worldly pride necessary in an heir to great power. A child when his father was murdered by the Burgundians who challenged his kingship, he seems thereafter to have been no more than flotsam on the tide of political influence of which he should more

properly have been the controller. Simple, melancholy and refined, so far as any one may judge by the wistfulness and most delicate nicety displayed in the medley of laments, prayers, billets-doux, and catches which he has left us, he must have been ill at ease at Azincourt, where he was taken prisoner, being borne thence to England to spend twenty-five years as a hostage of war. His work, cast almost wholly in the very restricted form of the ballade and the rondeau, is seldom less than pretty, while at times perfect ease and aptness of language wedded to sincere, if not very profound, feeling, justify his outstanding importance in the history of a literature that was feeling its way toward a fixed form and a common vocabulary. As was but likely from his station in the world and the tradition of his upbringing, his glance was held rather by the waning glamour of the mediæval age from which men were just then emerging, and his gentle muse finds her best delight in pathways worn for her by its ritual, in a certain sense of courtly behaviour and the unspoiled relish of good fellowship and good cheer. It was these two things of which François Villon, (1431–?), knew but little, if we may judge by the poems which he left behind him, (nearly all of them being directly or implicitly autobiographical), evil fellowship and a bare platter having generally fallen to the lot of this thriftless dependent of Guillaume, priest of the parish of Villon, whose name by adoption he bore. Death as the pitiless pursuer is his predominant theme, and it is not, perhaps, going too far if we explain this obsession by the accidents of a vagabond existence in which the sharp spur of hunger drove him to burgling or the slitting of throats. It may be, of course, that he was wastrel in fibre, and blamed fortune (in ballade metre)

for ills that were due rather to his own evil impulse or instability. However that may be, whatever he wrote bears with it something of a stark sincerity that makes nearly all the work of his contemporaries and forerunners seem no more than pretty fooling. The vagrom feelings which they tangled in a network of nimble conceits Villon felt in his very marrow, and set down wholly without ceremonial trappings ; so that, in spite of being written in a slang common in his day on the lips of cut-throats and street harpies, his work is far and away the most vital produced in his lifetime, or indeed during the hundred years that preceded or that followed it. It is full of the cutting humour of self-contempt and self-pity, with a good deal of sly railing against those betters of whom, as a Master of Arts of the University of Paris, he might once have been counted the equal.

The next hundred years produced no real poet in the sense of creator, though there were a great number of skilled adapters and translators, and in that field of satirical, didactic, allegoric, and dramatic poetry which lies outside our present scope, there were writers of solid worth. Deriving a great deal from all of these, Clément Marot, (1495–1544), exhibited his nimble talent in verses of nearly every kind, the best being, perhaps, the witty dialogues and epigrams full of fine malice and a lively dramatic sense. The learned Mellin de Saint-Gelais, (1487–1558), himself the son of a very learned rhyming bishop, was a writer of occasional verse, and won fame rather from the importance of the people to whom it was addressed than from its intrinsic worth. But he grafted the Italian sonnet on to the stem of French literature, and in this form were written the greater number of the pieces produced by his immediate successors, who, headed by Pierre de

Ronsard, (1524–1585), produced some of the supremest lyrical poetry of which France can boast, all athrob with the triumphant ardour of the Renaissance spirit, which found a new heaven on earth, and another never-failing in the life of antiquity. With a small band of fellow songsmiths calling themselves the "Pléiade," he launched his poetical manifesto "La Défense et Illustration de la Langue Française," in 1549, bearing the signature of Joachim du Bellay, (1525–1560), who, next to himself, was easily the most important poet of the group. This so-called "Défense" boldly took the offensive, inveighed against the mechanical forms of the ballade and the rondeau, and urged writers to the study of Greek and Latin both for the finding of their subjects and the enrichment of their vocabulary, while counselling the abandonment of mere translation. While it must be granted that, in spite of his too plethoric output and a classicism both of subject and vocabulary at times but ill-digested, Ronsard was a supremely perfect singer, he can hardly be acclaimed as of that small clan of great poets whose minds are as great as their music, so that their words lodge deeply in us when the music of them has gone by. His main theme, paraphrased by Herrick in "Gather ye rosebuds while ye may," recurring incessantly with a sameness of physical imagery, finishes by suggesting the enervation of mere bodily sickness. It is true that the idea is expressed with such perfect tenderness of suggestion in one or two pieces that these must be read as long as French is known. He has also an astonishing vigour in giving a living intensity to subjects apparently trite, as in the sonnet in which he proposes to read Homer in three days, or in that other, (triumphantly rendered with so many more by the late George Wyndham), which closes with

two lines admirably illustrating his masterly ease in flashing a sudden glamour on the vision—

> As lightning leaps a moment and is lost,
> Or as a cloud wanes out upon the wind.

There is in him, too, an extraordinary sense of physical delight in natural phenomena, such as is only granted to the incorruptible innocence of vision enjoyed by those great artists in whom the springs of childish wonder are never quenched.

Du Bellay, like his friend, was a man of high lineage, and accompanied his cousin the Cardinal on a mission to Rome. Thence came the series of impressive sonnets, some of which were translated with amazing fidelity by his great contemporary Edmund Spenser, and with such perfect propriety of contemporary idiom as no modern writer can hope to come near. Du Bellay died at thirty-five and left far less than Ronsard, but he wrote little that is not exceedingly *fine* in that word's more primitive meaning ; he is easily the most spiritual of the Pléiade, and touched the stops of more various quills than any of his fellows. Sonnets of love, of austere meditation, of religious musing, and of sharpest satire all came from his pen. If we never get with him the hint of coarseness which the more amorous Ronsard but thinly veils, we also find no hint of that robust delight in mere physical well-being which can so transfigure the material world.

With Philippe Desportes, (1545–1606), who after Ronsard's passing took first rank as arbiter of poetic taste, we find already strong signs of the head getting the better of the heart, of emotion being ousted by wit. The complete iconoclast arrived in Malherbe, (1555–1628), who, notwithstanding that his best lines owe everything to that very style of which Ronsard

had been the sire, declared truceless war on the "Pléiade" and all its works, and insisted on verse as regular in construction and as undeviating in sequence of idea as a proposition of Euclid. He and his followers doubtlessly produced fine literature of their own kind, but it is almost wholly without the lyric quality, unless the stateliness of ceremonial pomp be deemed synonymous with it. The luxurious woods and fields of Ronsard were all pruned to the semblance of a trim parterre, and set with marble nymphs that never felt the flutter of a human pulse. The wanton heed and giddy cunning of the lyric poet became the splendidly null perfection of the performer by rote.

Corneille, (1606–1684), and Racine, (1639–1699), Boileau, (1636–1711), and Voltaire, (1694–1778), are all great names in the history of French verse, and at least the two first-named rank as supremely fine artists in their own domain of abstract sentiment divorced from human personality. Their poetry is the flower of a social order by which its expression was very strictly constrained within limits forbidding the incoherence and forthrightness, (and therefore the verisimilitude), of overmastering passion. It is the literature of an aristocratic reserve that is horrified by anything suggestive of a "mauvais ton," and, despite the strength of several subsequent revolutions, many are the Frenchmen whose taste is still bound by its tenets. This is curiously illustrated by the sure signs of their present-day idolaters, for whom they stand as symbols of the old tradition which they love, while the iconoclasts regard them as the discredited oracles of a creed outworn. But the strictness, (not to say narrowness), of thought, and consequently of its literary garb, which culminated in Voltaire, while inducing the nimbleness and circumspection proper

to a tight-rope walker, allowed the poet to move only within as narrow a compass and with as unnatural a gait. The wine of Ronsard's undeniably heady vintage grew steadily drier until it became literally the vin-aigre of the cynical Voltaire. La Fontaine (1621–1695) alone knew how to move easily and with natural grace among the sublime commonplaces that become intolerable unless presented to us insinuatingly and with graphic sureness; but nothing really gives us any savour of the earth-sprung grape until we come to André Chénier (1762–1794), who, born at Constantinople of a Greek mother, reclothed the antique legends and idyls in his father's tongue, and died on the scaffold ere his genius had come to full fruition. Using the old rhyming French alexandrines exclusively for these classical subjects, he yet treated them so freshly and gave them such a flavour of sharp delight as to make them as real and as vivid as last night's flower-haunted ballroom or this morning's foursome on the links.

With the dawn of the nineteenth century came a splendour of poetical talent far exceeding all the previous glories of French literature. Alphonse de Lamartine (1790–1869), the first-born of the new galaxy leading the romantic revival which derived from Rousseau and Chateaubriand, and hardly less from the poets of our own land, wrote lines of a lyric sweep and moral elevation unsurpassed by any of his forerunners, and but seldom equalled by his followers. He never made a métier of poetry, which was no more than a by-product of his diplomatic and political occupations, so that while his verses are full of flaws and not exempt from the ready-made images of the old classical school, there is little that is not suffused with vital feeling—far more feeling

indeed, than the subject-matter seems sometimes to justify. Though he is brimful of

pure religion breathing household laws,

it is Byron rather than Wordsworth who was his conscious exemplar among the English poets, his admiration, (as later with de Musset), leading him to assume, with an attitude somewhat ludicrously self-conscious and austere, the tinsel-woven mantle of his romantic forerunner. But he sang nobly the alliance between man and the hills that overshadow and the homes that shelter him ; he first made articulate in French poetry, (what in his own majestic way Chateaubriand had already done in prose), the feeling of pious awe for nature as the arena for heroic exploits or the stern corrector of mean ones ; and if he is but little read by the present generation, it is due to the more scientific temper of our time, which resents that particular form of vanity in which its possessor imagines himself the chosen confident and mouthpiece of the Almighty. Veneration for the *foyer*, for the earth as God's footstool, and threshold of a life eternal and beyond human vicissitude, may sum up the whole of a really noble achievement that in our day is apt to be obscured by our keener appetite for what is frankly of the earth or even heaven-defying.

Alfred de Vigny, (1797–1863), is somewhat difficult to place, for though undoubtedly of the Romantic movement, he was never swept away by its main current. By its lofty austerity and contempt of circumstance his work is in sharp contrast to the rather lachrymose parade of self-pity common to Lamartine and de Musset, and links him to the Parnassians, whose work was a counterblast to theirs. English influence counted for much in his development. His

version of "Othello" was given at the Théâtre Français four years after his marriage to an English wife, (a union which repeated, less happily, a like experiment made by Lamartine), and a year earlier than the historic production of Hugo's "Hernani." This, together with his "Chatterton" and the mediævalism of "Le Cor," classes him with his Romantic contemporaries and shows that wistful regard for

> old, unhappy, far-off things
> And battles long ago,

which awoke with the dawn of Romanticism, and reminds us that a Gothic revival went hand-in-hand with it. On the other hand, the curious mysticism of "La Maison du Berger" and other pieces has caused him to be claimed as an ancestor of the Symbolists.

Victor Hugo, (1802–1885), son of a general of the first empire, despite his lack of humour, his vanity and his verbosity, is the greatest poet that France has produced, whether for depth and variety of utterance or for mastery of expression. If he failed as novelist and dramatist through his cardinal lack of detachment and restraint, he won his right to a place among the few supreme singers of the world by his work as a lyric, and especially as an epic poet. As the former but few French poets can equal him in any given kind, while none can approach his variety either in subject or in amazing polyphony of orchestration, though it must be admitted that in some of the finer shades of sensibility, (or, more truly, perhaps, of *tact* in treating of them), he is wanting, and sometimes blows his own trumpet so hard as to produce a cracked blast. As an epic poet dealing with historical events still rife in his own land and time, no one can approach him either in his own tongue or in ours, unless we name

one who, dealing with remoter happenings, did in dramatic what Hugo did in narrative poetry, and set him beside that Shakespeare who shone for him as a beacon in the earlier years of the Romantic revolt which he led. Producing throughout the whole period of a long life like a river in spate, his faults are those of superabundance and never of stinting. With his agility of thought and of language, (the second too often and too obviously conditioning the first), he will dazzle with a dozen swift images where a single one had helped to clearer vision. Not till the burden of grief or of wrath lay heavily on him did he completely cast off the shackles of his rhetoric to give the world the heart-cry that sounds in his dirge for his dead daughter, or in his righteous onslaught against the usurping Napoleon III, whose coming drove him into exile for twenty years. His superb "Expiation," with its astoundingly graphic description of the retreat from Moscow and the rout of Waterloo, in a rhyming alexandrine of such masterly rhythm and balance as to make it seem like a new measure after four centuries of hard usage, is sufficient to set him among the great epic poets of all time. Not merely does he flash on the mind's eye such pictures as

> Les blessés s'abritaient dans le ventre
> Des chevaux morts ; au seuil des bivouacs desolés
> On voyait des clairons à leur poste gelés,
> Restés debout, en selle et muets, blancs de givre,
> Collant leur bouche en pierre aux trompettes de cuivre,

but the mental agony is seized and set down with equal intensity,

> Et, chacun se sentant mourir, on était seul.

It is as though he were so saturated with his subject that the direct expression of what he felt were enough

to ensure truth to the psychology of it. Those four lines beginning *Il neigeait* within the first twenty, and the quiet, laconic, almost ironic couplet with which each section concludes, have the exalted restraint and clarity of supreme art, and strike on the imagination with all the force of concentred and calculated blows. It may be that the historical perspective is wrong, but posterity is apt to be indifferent to such considerations in view of the sublimity of the poetical vista.

What he had done for an age in "Les Châtiments" he achieved for the history of mankind in "La Légende des Siècles." Unquenchable compassion for all human suffering and misdoing, with unquestioning faith in man's high destiny, throbs throughout everything he wrote ; but he wrote so much, under such immediate pressure of events, and with such simple belief in his prophetic infallibility, that we may be forgiven for applying to so voluble a singer the words of Omar, and asking if he was always sober when he swore. But the epic Hugo lies without the scope of this volume, if, indeed, not beyond the reach of any translator's art, and I can do no more than offer a mingled posy of his lighter blooms.

Gerard de Nerval, (1808–1855), who rendered "Faust" into French very finely, represents the Germanic influence in the Romantic movement of which his own life was by way of a parody, though far from being so meant. A mystic by temperament, he fell on mental disorder and committed suicide, but not before he had coloured the stream of French poetry with a strange and magical infusion with which the work of the later Symbolists was to blend.

Alfred de Musset, (1810–1857), started by following in the footsteps of the early and more narrowly

Pierce Library
Eastern Oregon University
1410 L Avenue

romantic Hugo, and later, less happily, by playing at being

Byron, dans sa tristesse altière.

Voluptuous, witty, an incurable "gamin" who had played with fire and forbidden fruit from adolescence, at twenty-three he fell in with George Sand, six years his senior, escaped from the marriage yoke and already a known flouter of convention by free unions with lovers of her choice. Together they set out for Italy, where continual quarrels, Musset's illness, and George Sand's infidelity with a new-found lover in the doctor who attended him, culminated in rupture, the young poet returning to Paris unaccompanied. This crisis in his life provides the background to all that he subsequently wrote, and its exploitation roused the scorn of Leconte de Lisle, (1818–1894), and the Parnassians, who held with him that poetry should treat of abstract beauty and rise above the stress of private sorrows and their lamentation. As the triumphs and failures of Hugo are largely incident to his position

au centre de tout comme un écho sonore,

so the attitude of Leconte de Lisle bespeaks supreme isolation from the turmoil of humanity, and a horror of that quality of emotion which is facile to grovel or exult, and is quite foreign to any feeling of shame in its self-exposure. In this he begets the great awe and little love that is given to our own aloof Milton, whom also he resembles in the elaboration of his descriptive passages, in his vast array of classical and far-sought illustration, and in a certain monotony of ponderous diction, though, like the great Puritan, he can on occasion surprise us by a shy sally of lyrical song. It is unfortunate that he never condescends

to a footnote or the simplification of his classical or exotic terminology ; for a vast deal of his work assumes in the reader a knowledge of the world's sagas from Iceland to Ceylon, and a close acquaintance with the strange flora and fauna of the tropic zones to which the poet was himself native and amid which he delighted to move. He strove to see all life as an imposing spectacle, himself standing aloof ; but the very deliberation of this attitude renders intenser the emotion conveyed in certain poems which betray his discovery of himself as an agonist in the human drama he had affected to ignore. Beside him, though by chronology and early associations he was allied for a while to the Romantics, we must set Théophile Gautier, (1811–1872), who, beginning life as a painter, has the keen eye for the form and colour of material things which distinguishes the school. They regarded rhyme with reverence as both spur and bridle to Pegasus, and the stricter the bonds the more they rejoiced in them. So we find with them, as with de Banville, (1823–1891), and Heredia, (1842–1905), continual cultivation of such forms as the sonnet, "terza rima," and ballade. They are united, too, in their devotion to antiquity and their hatred of the Middle Ages and the religion identified with the mortification of the sinful flesh, which they preferred to regard as in itself godly. Leconte de Lisle stands for a more deliberate reaction against the extravagancies of Hugo, against his anthropomorphism that saw God's steely glance in every sunbeam and setting a snare about men's feet for ever stumbling between purgatory and paradise ; he expresses the revolt of a pessimist who had little faith in man and none in Providence, whose highest aim was to endure nobly and without complaining till welcome death should

make him one with the glorious but insensible world in which he dwelt as in exile or in expiation. The practice of the school seldom fell below its Spartan precepts, and if Hugo has full need of that indulgent law whereby posterity agrees to remember only what is deathless in a writer's output, these four may almost be allowed to forgo its benefits. The fastidious art of Gautier is the product of a pleasure-loving mind of meridional temper that, robust of appetite for the good things and the smooth things, and the elegant trifles and amenities of human life, was yet the more aghast at the thought of the " abhorréd shears " ; and, shrinking from present realities, (other than plastic ones), sought what a modern critic has well called " an escape from life " in the contemplation and practice of his art. So, perfect craftsman though he is, he cannot be admitted to supreme rank. But his peculiar quality of visual exactitude, (especially in landscape), served to strengthen the predilection of the Parnassians who followed him ; his feeling for delicate detail was like a spring rain to the seed of de Banville's fancy ; and his shiver at corruption passed into the shudders that, with deeper feeling and sublimer imagery, became articulate in Baudelaire. De Banville is the will-o'-the-wisp of French poetry; he links the lightest of fancies and the slightest of emotions into a gossamer of rhyme ; his thought is as flimsy as may be, and his emotion a light wanton obedient to the beck and call of his line endings ; but his winsome grace and freshness make such considerations appear wholly insidious and irrelevant while we are under the spell of their delightful artifice.

It is doubtful whether any single poet has ever reached such high rank as Heredia with so small a volume of work. His emotion is mainly that of a

connoisseur—a calm intensity of detached delight in no way involving the heart's surrender—and it is expressed in pondered artistry of the most exquisite kind. He will give you a whole civilization in a sonnet, but only because he has first become steeped in the sentiment of its era, especially as shown by its visual embodiment in forms of material pomp and magnificence. As Hugo in "La Légende des Siècles" had given us a series of historical pictures from the dawn of Time down to the era of the great Napoleon, so Leconte de Lisle, seeking more exotic themes, and without Hugo's preoccupation with what the younger poet would have termed "sham and sensuous religiosity," gave us a series of heroic frescoes drawn in hard, stupendous outline by an artist almost inhumanly impassive, who sat

> as God holding no form of creed
> But contemplating all,

and recording phenomena with Olympian detachment and completeness. It is Heredia's glory to have filled in these outlines with the richest of colouring and the most elaborate ornamentation, for of Leconte de Lisle's cardinal part he is but the development and culmination, gathering in intensity and concentration what he loses in range and scope. There is hardly a flaw in any of the hundred and eighteen sonnets which, (with two longer but less important narrative pieces), fill his only volume. Each sonnet presents a complete picture to which every word adds a touch of colour, and if, after persistent reading, the manner of its making becomes a little obvious, and the manœuvring preliminary to the triumphant rally of his fourteenth line ceases to impose upon the reader, that is perhaps no more than an inherent defect of the

restricted medium in which he chose to write. Noon on the Nile two thousand years ago, Siesta in the tropic sunlight, Hannibal musing after victory, the Samurai full-armed for battle, are seen and set down with such intense clarity and completeness that each sonnet might be termed an alembic holding in little all the essentials of an epoch. His work sometimes suffers from a too aboriginal delight in mere gauds and the unattainably expensive, (just as a thousand visitors to the Tower will stand agape over the Crown jewels for one who will examine the graving of human sorrow on its walls) ; so that one sonnet will sound like a rhymed inventory of some antique looter for whom no item is a token of noble living now made dust, while another will paint the lily and gild the gold of sunrise at Constantinople with such extravagance of hue that the result is at once magnificent and preposterous. From this failing his master's abiding sense of futility restrained him.

Allied to these by a scrupulous devotion to form was Charles Baudelaire, (1821–1867), whose æsthetic sensibility went along with a curious spirit of analysis which he shared with Edgar Alan Poe, whose tales he translated. He was fond of experimenting in the morbid, and in the end fell a victim to his appetite for sensation, his death being a happy release from the mental paralysis which had overwhelmed him. Like Poe, he saw the skeleton at every feast with a vision unthwarted by the beauty that enthralled him—a beauty whose flame consumes the soul that it illumines, making victims of its adorers. The two were akin again in their fondness for recurrent lines, like the restless haunting of accusing voices, though it is true that this may have been suggested to Baudelaire by the Malay "pantoum," a form to which

Leconte de Lisle also subdued his lofty mind. As the creator of mental images through the medium of the most superfine nervous sensations, he is one of the most direct forerunners of the Symbolists. Though nervous sensibility wrought havoc on his fleshly part, his spiritual gaze never lost sight of the reality that lies behind appearances ; and if he was the conscious slave to them, the real man, (in spite of a blatant dissembling), was a rebel to the bondage, and could not wholly stifle the cry that sounds ever and anon like Faust's in bitter anguish for his bartered heaven. Born of a sire already turned three-score, the pride of the flesh and the delight of the eye tortured him with a wild appetite for conquests that were beyond the enjoyment of his impoverished blood : hence came the superb allure and strange nostalgia of forbidden fruit that haunt his verses ; hence too in bitter spite, perhaps spurred on by the inarticulate presentiment of an early exhaustion, came the joyless quest of emotional excesses that led only to satiety.

To the Parnassian school belongs also Sully Prudhomme, (1839–1907), by his adherence to strict form, though we must agree with Leconte de Lisle that he is not quite " de la maison," owing to his exploitation of those intimate heart-searchings which his great chief regarded with so much disfavour. One of the most typical poets of his time, without any marked endowment of lyrical power, but with extreme sensibility and perfect craft and delicacy of self-analysis, he was able to express with touching sincerity the ordeal of a soul despairing of guidance in a world which had lost its power of trusting the old sanctions and prohibitions in which present happiness and eternal salvation were once to be found. Endowed with all the facility and adaptability which Sully

Prudhomme lacked, Catulle Mendès, (1842–1909), might have often achieved greatness had he shown the strength and stubbornness proper to an original mind that beats out its own music without stooping to mimic its betters. His house was, towards 1866, a rallying-point for all those who marched under the Parnassian banner ; he married a daughter of Gautier, and shared the faith which he continued to profess, (if not always to practise), even down to 1900, when he wrote :

> Car il n'est poème au parfait aloi
> Qui ne soit la fleur d'une stricte loi,
>
> Car même le vol infini de l'aigle
> Suit à travers cieux l'orbe d'une règle.

Paul Verlaine, (1844–1896), began as a Parnassian, but was afterwards regarded as the leader of the Symbolist school that aimed at the greatest freedom as regards prosody and pretended to set down nothing as a mere fact but everything as a symbol of something beyond itself. Absolute surrender to the vagrom mood without the sophistication of any conscious moral or intellectual purpose beyond its sincere and melodious expression was the whole of his gospel ; and to him the symbolism was really no more than incidental and implied, phenomena taking on whatever character the momentary emotion of the singer imputed to them. It fitted the man who was impulsive as a child, and subject to sensuous impressions and suggestions, to sudden passions, devotions, angers and sorrows, celestial and of the slime, which the normal man outgrows. Baudelaire's

> Je haie le mouvement qui déplace les lignes

did not allow that unquestioning compliance with the stress and urgency of feeling which Verlaine demanded

of the Muse. His was a more comfortable doctrine for those who would shirk the

austères études

on which the elder poet insisted ; but its right application required a fineness of sensory perception and a responsiveness thereto which can hardly survive childhood, together with enough intelligence to render it significant, and a wealth of metrical invention beyond all reckoning. Child as he was, and musical as a reed, even Verlaine but seldom fulfilled all these conditions ; nor did he ever practise such metrical freedom as the theory seems to predicate. His work is remarkable for its naïve candour of close confidence, which makes every poem a bulletin of the sick soul as surely as the medical chart above a sick man's pillow serves to that end for his ailing body. Only his grace and sincerity save him from being intolerably maudlin, and make his appeal as difficult to resist as the babble of a repentant child.

The poetry of moods and sensations, the creation of atmosphere without any care for coherence, was the too consciously cultivated purpose of the Symbolist Stéphane Mallarmé, (1842–1898), most of whose writings mean nothing at all or suggest everything, according as you read them or into them—whatever you will. Here it is not the emotion that dominates the fancy and creates it ; but to the wanderings of rudderless fancy you must fit whatever emotions seem best to give purpose to their erratic course. It is somewhat like watching the gestures of a man through a pane of frosted glass without knowing the room that is behind it nor the occupation of its tenant, and trying to guess what is the matter that holds him there and the purpose of his movements. In form

Mallarmé is Parnassian ; but he so clouded the Pierian spring before sipping from it that it is difficult for any but a neophyte not to find in his work an elaborate form of *blague*, not the less mischievous for the fact that he was himself the dupe of it. His sin as a poet, (for his earlier work shows that he was capable of true ecstasy), consists of an intellectual pride that made him disdain surrender to impulse and prefer the analysis of it ; he never gives us his emotion in the full ardour of fusion but only in a dead precipitate. And the matter is complicated by his scholarship and a consequent adoption of an alien syntax, so that he came to write in a sort of cipher of which himself alone held the key. As a protest both against the excessive ritual and visual exactitude of the Parnassians and the loudness and over-emphasis of Hugo, this literature of hints and half-tones seeing everything, as Amiel saw landscape, as an " état d'âme," and surrendering completely to the suggestions imposed by it, had a valuable influence, though it was too often weakened by followers who sought the cover of its haze for their own incompetence. The movement was finally dissipated in a superstitious type of mock-simple animism not far removed from silliness. The fact that the two most complete Parnassians were Creoles while Symbolism found its aptest exponents among northern men, and especially among the Belgians, is not without significance as suggesting in climate a source of the æsthetic manifestation natural to the hard glitter and sharp outline of tropic countries and the mistiness and changeability of chilly ones. And it is worth noticing that Symbolism synchronized with the rise of Impressionism in French painting, and, like its sister art, derived largely, if indirectly, from English sources.

From the Symbolists or the Parnassians, not seldom from both—starting with the mutinous vanguard and falling later into the ranks of the old tradition—most of the more recent poets derive, though among the more interesting are those who are most restive under the old yoke and strike out a new furrow through clay that has been long neglected, getting into closer touch with the commoner hopes and sentiments of workaday men by affecting the simplicity of a time when printing was still unlearnt and the folk-song still unforgotten, before the pause and stress derived from a musical notation had been ousted by the more stately monotony of declamatory verse. Along with this has gone a flouting of Academic ordinance by making the ear the final arbiter both of rhythm and of rhyme, and ignoring the merely visual signs of these in the printed word where they are no longer confirmed by the tongue's delivery as heard in familiar speech.

London, April 1917

BOOK I

À

MONSIEUR LE DOYEN

À

MESSIEURS LES PROFESSEURS

DE LA FACULTÉ DES LETTRES

DE L'UNIVERSITÉ DE

GRENOBLE

EN HOMMAGE RECONNAISSANT

ANONYMOUS

(12th Century)

1. THE TWA SYSTRES

THE mirk did fa' lang syne, lang syne
When twa fond systres wi' hands that twine
Went doun to bathe whaur the waters shine.
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

A ladde rode by as the red sun dipt,
He saw her white whaur the waters whipt.
He tookit her straught in hys airms and clipt.
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

" Noo systre deare, when full's your skeel
Gang hame by the road that ye ken weel.
I bide wi' him that is my ain leel."
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

Then wan wi' dule she greeted there
Wi' drounded een and hairt maist sair
To gang wi' her systre nevermair.
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

" Alas ! she cried, " wae's me ! wae's me !
She leaves me lain whaur the waters be

To follow her ladde to his ain countree.''
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

They turned them then nor touchit groun'
Till they rode into the far-off toun
And there were blest wi' the priest abune.
Blaw wind, bend beugh in the stormy weather,
They that be leel sleep saft taegither.

GUIOT DE DIJON

(13th Century)

2. THE LAYE OF THE LADYE OF FAEL

FOR myne owne courage will I synge
That I maye soothe and strengthen it ;
For spite of all my sufferynge
I will not die nor lose my wit,
Though from that land of heathen shame
No home-come pilgrym I doe meet,
Where nowe he is whose spoken name
Doth make my sad heart wildly beat.

Godde ! when the cry is ''Charge amayne !''
O guard the pilgrym lest he fall
For whom I suffer soe great payne.
For Saracens are felons all.

Until the slowe yeare round shall swynge,
I will endure without assuage.
O ! safe from peril Godde hym brynge
Back from hys holie pilgrymage.

And, spite of all my kindred saye,
Myne owne true love I will not quit
To cleave unto another claye ;
And mad is he that sayeth it.

Godde! when the cry is " Charge amayne! "
O guard the pilgrym lest he fall
For whom I suffer soe great payne.
For Saracens are felons all.

JEHANNOT DE LESCUREL

(14th Century)

3. BALLADE

FAYRE, in loyaltie
I thee love; love me.
I will serve thee aye,
Never will I straye
From thy companie.
Love could never flit
For he hath not wit
Howe to fynde a waye:
Nowe, by Goddës faye!
Ladye, laye thy laughynge mouth
On myne owne I praye.

Fayre the gyft. I trowe,
An thou doe bestowe,
That thy heart is myne;
Then shall I be thyne
More and more alsoe.

Gentle ladye tell
If thou fynde me well
And sweet love have swaye:
Nowe, by Goddës faye!
Ladye, laye thy laughynge mouth
On myne owne I praye.

Fayre of face art thou.
Never cheek and browe
Could I kiss enough;
An I won thy love,
'Twere an end of woe.
Soe that I may wit
If thou grant me it,
And thou wilt me paye:
Nowe, by Goddës faye!
Ladye, laye thy laughynge mouth
On myne owne I praye.

JEAN FROISSART

(1337–1410)

4. RONDEAU OF HYS LADYE

SOE blithe am I when I a rose doe smell;
Soe full of bliss when I my Ladye see;
Of twayne one onlye soothes the heart of me:
Soe blithe am I when I a rose doe smell.
Sweet is the scent; whereas her sighte doth quell
My heart soe that myne eyes ashaméd be:
Soe blithe am I when I a rose doe smell,
Soe full of bliss when I my Ladye see.

5. RONDEAU OF FARE-WELL

My bodye goes; I leave wyth thee my heart.
Ladye most deare, fare-well till I ryde home.
Ah! woe is me that I soe far must roam:
My bodye goes; I leave wyth thee my heart.
But sweet remembrances shall soothe the smarte
All the sad whyle till back to thee I come:
My bodye goes; I leave wyth thee my heart.
Ladye most deare, fare-well till I ryde home.

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS

(1340–1410)

6. BALLADE OF PENTECOST

ON high Pentecost I found
In thys gracious month of Maye,
Her to whom my heart is bound
In a garden faire a-straye,
Pluckynge roses. I did saye
"Kyss me." "Gladlye," she reply'd.
In thys wise Love hadde hys waye,
With a rose on either syde.

Since her love me comforted
Doubt and fear are driven awaye;
Now with Hope I ever tread
On that garden of deare claye.
Hence her gentle leave and aye
Fond desirës that abyde

Still as sweet as when we laye
With a rose on either syde.

Her sweet kyss hath driven oute
More of grief than I can saye;
All my sorrowe and my doubte
Now is soothéd by her swaye.
I doe bless the houre and daye
Found me thus soe faire a bryde
Kissynge in soe kynde a waye,
With a rose on either syde.

Prince, thys ladye on a daye
I did fynde for mate and bryde;
There and then I kyssed my faye
With a rose on either syde.

7. RONDEAU OF SOLDIERHOOD

SUMMER'S the time for soldierhood,
Or Spryng when all the grass is high
And sunbeams make old Winter fly:
The chargers then fynde forage good,
And ground is smooth wheron to lie.
Summer's the time for soldierhood,
Or Spryng when all the grass is high.
Then snowe is thawn from wold and wood,
And pilgryms synge as they goe bye.
Then take thy speare with shield a-nigh,
Summer's the time for soldierhood,
Or Spryng when all the grass is high
And sunbeams make old Winter fly.

CHRISTINE DE PISAN

(1363–1430)

8. BALLADE OF SPRYNGE-TYME

NOWE cometh the soe gracious month of Maye
That is ryghte gladsome, she that doth bestowe
Such sweetnesse; nowe be fields and woods growne gaye
With leaves and flourës that doe blithelye blowe.
In all thynges joye hath swaye.
Nowe greene the meadowe is and eke the spraye,
And all thynges nowe forswear their sorrowynge
For the faire boone this merrye month doth brynge.

The birds goe singynge a glad roundelaye,
And all thynges the like happinesse doe knowe;
But woe is me that suffer such dismaye,
For wanderynge love begetteth onlye woe;
Nowe me joye cannot swaye,
Who growe in sorrowe as tyme groweth gaye.
Lovers well knowe how sharper grief can stynge
For the faire boone this merrye month doth brynge.

Nowe doe I weep, lamentynge nighte and daye
Him whom I lack, and who doth nought bestowe;
Nowe Love's worst onset that comes nigh to slaye,
His feints and torments I doe sadlye knowe.
In this sweet tyme alwaye
I have noe joye who am despoiléd aye
Of that desire wherto soe firm I clynge
For the faire boone this merrye month doth brynge.

9. RONDEAU OF SECRET SORROWE

HOWE hard a thynge it is to dree
When heart doth weep and mouth must synge,
When grief must hyde from companie
Howe hard a thynge it is to dree.
Yet some must mask their miserie
Lest honour be a smirchéd thynge:
How hard a thynge it is to dree.

ANONYMOUS

(15th Century)

10. FOLK SONG

WHAT shall I doe if love me leave?
Night and daye I cannot sleepe.

For my lover I doe grieve
When unto my bed I creepe.

Then I rise with bodye bare
And doe on my robe of graye;

Glidynge down a secret stayre,
Thro' the grove I wend awaye.

There the merry larke doth synge,
And the nightingale doth crye

In his prettye jargonynge,
"See these lovers farynge bye,

"On the river in a boat
Movynge on her stately waye,

"With a satin saile a-float
And with silken cordes for staye.

"The tall maste is ivorie,
And the rudder golden pale;

"From a far awaye countrie
Come the lads that trim the saile.

"One that bears the Fleurs-de-Lys
Is the Kynge of France's sonne,

"And the other lad, I wis
Is my owne belovéd one."

CHARLES D'ORLÉANS

(1391–1465)

II. BALLADE

O PRAYE for peace, sweet mayde Marie
  High Queene of Heaven and world's mistrésse,
Make praye your holy companie
  By gentle favour, and addresse
  Your Sonne that from his loftinesse
He maye his wayward people heede
For whom in ransom he did bleede,
  Nowe prone for warre that wasteth all;
O praye and never cease to plead
  That peace, joy's treasure, maye befall.

Praye priests and who live holilie;
Sleeke friars leave your slothfulnesse;
Praye learnéd men lest warre should be
That setteth studie in sore stresse;
The ruined shrine you shall not blesse
Who there nor missal write nor read,
Nor followe where Lord Godde doth lead.
Then loudly nowe upon Hym call,
For soe ordaineth church and creed)
That peace, joy's treasure, maye befall.

Praye Princes who hold landes in fee,
Kynges, Dukes, Earls, all of knightly fesse,
And gentlemen of chivalrie,
Lest churls o'ercome your gentlenesse;
In graspynge hands your wealth growes lesse,
From hot dispute and evil greede,
As you maye see. O intercede,
(For they growe proude and rich with all
Wherwith your people you should feede)
That peace, joy's treasure, maye befall.

Praye folk that bear hard tyrannie,
For sore is your lords' feeblenesse
Who cannot holde their masterie
Nor help you in your evil stresse;
Praye merchant in sore paine noe lesse,
Too long a-straddle on your steede,
(For you noe more afar maye speede
To barter in the baron's hall,
Such peril doth the highwaye breede)
That peace, joy's treasure, maye befall.

Lord Godde Almightie doth us heede.
From Earth, Sky, Ocean, in our neede

Let prayer rise unto Him from all,
Who onlye can amend ill deede,
That peace, joy's treasure, maye befall.

12. RONDEAU

HOWE comely hath Godde made her be,
Gracióus and goode and fair of moulde
That every man her doth beholde
Must prayse her soul's consistencie.
For who could tire of such as she
Whose lovelinesse doth aye unfolde?
Howe comely hath Godde made her be,
Gracióus and goode and fair of moulde.
Nor can I fynde by lande or sea,
Or virgin maid or matron olde
As doth such perfect graces holde;
The thought of her is dream to me:
Howe comely hath Godde made her be!

13. RONDEAU

MYNE only love, my joye, my boone,
More deare to me than ought beside,
I prithee joyously doe bide
In hope that I maye see thee soone.
I seeke a waye by nighte, by noone,
To come to thee, if Godde me guide,
Myne only love, my joye, my boone,
More deare to me than ought beside.
And if, by wishynge it, my shoone
Maye brynge me nigh thee, nought denied
Of all that under heav'n doth hide,
Shall sette me cryinge for the moone:
Myne only love, my joye, my boone.

14. BALLADE

WITHIN the forest of sad wearinesse
One daye uncompanied I chanced to wend,
And therin did encounter love's Goddésse
Who made me question of my journey's end.
To whom I told howe Fortune did me rend
And drive awaye into the woodland close,
That not miscalled a man maye be, soe penned,
A man astraye that knowes not where he goes.

She, smilynge in her soe great kindlinesse,
Made answer to me, "Did I knowe, deare friend,
Wherfor thou farest in soe sore distresse,
Myne aid to thee I willyngly would lend;
Since, long agoe I did thy heart intend
For pleasant wayes, whom malice misbestowes,
And much it grieveth me to see thee wend,
A man astraye that knowes not where he goes."

"Alas!" said I, "O sovereign princesse,
Hear thou my plight and hearken to the end:
'Tis Death hath done me this dire hurtfulnesse,
And taken from me my belovéd friend
In whom my hope was; she who did attend
To guide me, in my farynge ever close;
Whose like nowe is not, wherfor I doe wend
A man astraye that knowes not where he goes.

"Syghtlesse, I goe a journey without end;
And, lest that I should stumble I doe send
My staff before me with unsteady blowes.
And pitiful it is that I must wend,
A man astraye that knowes not where he goes."

15. RONDEAU

TYME hath throwne downe the robe he bare
Of winde and cold and chillye rayne,
And nowe with sunbeams cleare agayne
In lordlye raiment doth he fare.
Each beast and birde doth nowe declare
Harsh-voiced or smoothe the tidynges playne:
Tyme hath throwne downe the robe he bare
Of winde and cold and chillye rayne.
Nowe fountaynes, streams and brookes repair
Their sheeny floods that downward drayne
With gold and silver in their trayne;
All thynges new vesture nowe doe weare:
Tyme hath throwne downe the robe he bare.

16. RONDEAU

SALUTE for me the fellowe-ship
Nowe met together joyouslie,
And saye howe gladlye I would be
Beside them where the flagons dip;
But old Age hath me in his grip,
And dried the sap of youth in me:
Salute for me the fellowe-ship
Nowe met together joyouslie.
Tyme was I loved a wench's lip,
And all my veins did dance with glee
That nowe be taut with miserie,
Soe tightly held in ague's grip:
Salute for me the fellowe-ship.

FRANÇOIS VILLON

(1431– ?)

17. FROM THE GREATER TESTAMENT (XXXVIII–XLI)

I KNOWE full well I am noe saynte
  That moves in heaven's starrie zone
Star-crownéd beyond mortal taynte.
  My father's dead; beneath the stone
  He lies whose soule to Godde is flowne.
I knowe my mother too must die—
  She's well aware of it, poor crone—
And her son's lyfe doth hasten bye.

I knowe that all men, rich and poor,
  Wyse men and foolish, priest and churl,
Niggards and who keep open door,
  Tall, short, fair, uglye, serf and earl,
  And every hussyf, wench, or girl
In fillet bound, or hooded tall
  With flaps that round the collar curl,
By Death are seizéd one and all.

And Paris dies and Helen dies,
  And each in dyinge hath such payne
That all his breath out of him flies,
  And gall over his heart doth drayne;
  And then he sweats, Godde knowes! amayne,
And theryn hath but little ease,
  For none of all his kin be fayne
To bear for him his agonies.

Death leaves him shudderynge and growne wan,
His nose down-curved, his veins displayed,
His neck all puffed, flesh smooth to span,
With nerves and joints all wracked and frayed;
And woman too, soe tender made,
Soe soft, soe smooth bye breast and thyghes,
Aye, even she must thus be laid,
Or else fare straighte to Paradyse.

18. THE BALLADE OF LOVELY LADYES OF LONG AGOE

O TELL me where and in what lande
Is Flora and the Roman lass?
Where's Thaïs or the Ladye grande
That was her equal in all grace?
Saye where doth Echo hyde her face
Whose voice bye streame and pool doth straye,
Whose beauty more than mortal was?—
But where are the white snowes borne awaye?

Where nowe is learnéd Heloïse
For whom poor Abelard lost all
Quick fuel of love's agonies,
And answered toe the holye call?
Likewyse I aske what doth befall
The Queene that Buridan did slaye,
Flung to the Seine for burial?—
But where are the white snowes borne awaye?

Queene Blanche as anye lily wan,
Whose voice was sweet as syrens fayne;
Berte, Bicé, Alice loved of man,
Or Ermengarde that ruled in Mayne?

Or Jean the goode lass from Lorrayne
Burnt by the Englysh rabble? Saye
Where are they Virgin Sovereigne?—
But where are the white snowes borne awaye?

Prince, not thys weeke, thys year shall deigne
To thee their hidynge to betraye;
The onlye answer thou shalt gaine—
But where are the white snowes borne awaye?

19. FROM THE GREATER TESTAMENT (XXII, XXIII, AND XXVI)

I DOE bemoan my youthful sinne
And the steep road I hurried bye
Until I met old Age therin
That hid youth's going from myne eye.
Nought of his footsteps I descrye
Nor palfrey's hoof-prints. How went he?
As sudden as a bird doth flye,
And left me nought but beggarye.

He is fled awaye and I am left
Who little knowe nor understand,
Less ripe than rotten, all bereft
Of mirth and money, house and land.
I bear upon me the harsh brand
Of mine own kind who from the fold
Doe drive me with unkindlye hand
Because I have but little gold.

Ah! Godde, hadde I in my wild youth
But studied well and walked arighte,
I mighte have hadde an house in sooth
And lain between warm sheets o' nighte.

But, naye! from school I took my flighte
As anye naughtye ladde will doe.
Nowe when these woeful words I write
My heart comes nigh to break in two.

20. FROM THE GREATER TESTAMENT (LXXVI–LXXIX)

I GIVE my bodye untoe her that gatte
Our grandam earth; theron, though worms maye bite
Untoe the bone, they shall fynde little fatte,
Soe long hath hunger fought a winnynge fighte.
Straighte to the earth let it be borne outrighte:
From earth that came, to earth at last doth come;
For everythynge, unlesse my pen mys-write,
To its owne place at laste goes gladlye home.

Untoe my more than father haplye founde,
William of Villon, him who was more milde
Untoe the babe in swaddlynge raiment bounde
Than ever Mother bye her sonne beguiled;
Him that did save me from adventures wilde
Full often—I doe give, lest he forgette
Or else be loth to praye for his dead childe,
The score of books within my cabinet.

Untoe this godlye man likewyse I will
The tale that at my biddynge Tabarie
Did copye out in large script with his quill,
Than whom was never man more trustworthye.
In quires beneath the table dustilye
It lies, and though the laboured style wherwith
'Tis written be a hindrance, all, pardie!
May be forgiven for the matter's pith.

Untoe my Mother,—for her soul's relief
That therwith on our Ladye she maye call,
Who for my sinnes hath had much bitter grief
God knoweth, and much sorrowynge withal;
Noe other castel have I nor strong wall
Whertoe my bodye and my soul maye flee
When on my path a-manye perils fall,
Nor my poor Mother hath no more than me :—

21. BALLADE MADE FOR HIS MOTHER THAT SHE MIGHTE PRAYE TOE OUR LADYE

LADYE of heaven that o'er earth hath swaye
And of Hell's marshes art most Royal Reeve,
Grant toe thy humble Christian that doth praye,
To be of those thy virtue doth retrieve.
Though all unworthye of thy great reprieve,
Ladye and mistresse whom I worship well,
Yet can thy virtues save my soul from Hell
Despite my sinfulnesse, and purge the offence
Soe that I win to heaven. Truth I tell:
And in this faith I live and will goe hence.

Tell toe thy Sonne that I am his; my shame
I bear untoe him to be purged of sinne.
Forgive me even as the Egyptian dame
Or as the clerk Theophilus who did win
Thy pardon and a new life did begin,
Though he hadde given his soul in bond to Hell.
Guard me, O Virgin, from foul Satan's spell
Soe that the holye bread I taste, nor thence
Be driven, till Tyme sounde my passynge bell:
And in this faith I live and will goe hence.

I am but a poor old woman whose dim eyes
That lack book-learning, do with joy behold
Within the church a painted Paradyse
With harps and eke with lutës manifold;
Therunder a huge cauldron wherin roll'd
The damnéd seethe for ever in deep Hell,
The which I fear. O Goddesse, let me dwell
Where joy is. Thou, the sinner's sure defence,
Fill me with faith, and all my sloth dispell:
And in this faith I live and will goe hence.

Thou barest, Virgin Princesse, without stain,
Jesus the Kynge that doth for ever reign.
The Almightye, seeinge us in thrall to Hell,
Didde give his deare sonne for our soul's offence
To die, and from the heavens where he doth dwell,
Our Lord did brynge salvation as I tell:
And in this faith I live and will goe hence.

22. EPITAPH IN BALLADE FORM WHICH VILLON MADE FOR HIMSELF AND HIS FELLOWES, EXPECTYNGE TO BE HANGED ALONG WITH THEM

O BROTHER men that live when we have end,
Let not your hearts 'gainst us be hardenynge;
For if on us your pitie ye doe spend,
Likewyse to you shall Godde be pityinge.
Here maye ye see our six lean trunks a-swynge,
And our dead flesh that, livynge, we o'er-fed
Plucked out bye bits and rottynge toe to head,
While we, bare bones, to ash and dust be come.
From our ill hap let noe man's mirth be bred,
But praye Godde to absolve us of our doome.

If, brother men, we call, beyond amend,
Disdayne us not for our sore trespassynge,
For well ye knowe howe manye men doe wend
On evil wayes thro' witless wanderynge;
But intercession for our soules doe brynge
Untoe the Holye Virgin's Sonne instead,
That He of His deare grace have still toe shed
Withal wherby to save us from Hell's fume.
Let noe man nowe misuse us, being dead,
But praye Godde to absolve us of our doome.

The rayne hath bleached us all from end to end;
The sunne hath scorched us to a blackened strynge
Mag-pyes and crowes our hollowe eyes doe rend,
Or snatch what hair bye beard or browe doth clynge.
And ever without cease we swaye and swynge,
Like monstrous spindles ever flutteréd,
By the wind's shiftye humours sore bestéd,
Peck't close bye all the birds that us consume
As anye thimble. Ware the waye we tread,
But praye Godde to absolve us of our doome.

Prince Jesus, Lord of all, or live or dead,
O save us from infernal serfage dread,
That have nor help nor holdynge in Hell's gloome.
Men, mock not what in bitter truth is said,
But praye Godde to absolve us of our doome.

23. HIS OWNE EPITAPH

ETERNAL rest on him bestowe,
O Lord, and everlastynge light,
Who lacked withal for sup or bite,
Shorn close on scalp and chin and browe,

Who was scrap't bare and smooth, I trowe
As any turnip round, poor wighte:
Eternal rest on him bestowe.
Hard doome befell him here belowe,
Drove forth and smote him in sore spite,
Though "I appeal!" he cried with mighte,
A form of speech that's playne enowe:
Eternal rest on him bestowe.

MELLIN DE SAINT-GELAIS

(1487–1558)

24. OF HYS LADYE

NOT all the shippes bye Venice quay,
Nor oyster-shells bye Norman shore,
Nor all the swannes in Temmes that be
With archéd neck and ebon oar,
Can reach the tallie of her lore.

Not wooinges made in holye guise,
Nor pryde of princelynges got from Spayne,
Nor all the lure of cunnynge lies,
Nor all the golde that misers gaine,
Can match the brightnesse of her brayne.

Not all the beasts bye man untamed,
Nor all the wiles of warrynge men,
Nor all reprieves bye Rome proclaimed,
Nor all the words ere writ by penne,
Can halve the wisdom in her kenne.

MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE

(1492–1549)

25. DIZAIN TO CLÉMENT MAROT

IF but your creditors, the which you chyde,
Did knowe as I the worth of your rare wit,
Of all your dettes you might full soon be quit
Or great or smalle, whatever still maye byde;
If each did holde a dizain duly writ,
What sum soever the full worth of it
Would then be his by thousands multiplied.
The worth of money maye by weight be tolde,
But none maye knowe what guerdon doth befit
Such skill as yours beyond all worth of gold.

CLÉMENT MAROT

(1495–1544)

26. DIZAIN IN ANSWER TO THE FOREGOING

MY dunnes that untoe dizains give smalle care,
Did read your owne. Wheron I say'd, "You see,
My noble Michael, noble Luckyfare,
The Kynge's owne sister doth soe honour me."
Straightwaye they deemed me of stabilitie,
And rained "Your worships" and "Respected Sirs."
Thus was your script to me as golden ore,
For they did promise respyte—nay, they swore
To let me fill—for promises—my purse
While I did sweare to borrowe—as before.

27. OF THE ABBOT AND HIS VALET

HIS grace the Abbot and his servynge ladde
Are of one claye as honey is of wax;
One is a loon, the other one is madde;
One loves a joke, the other his sides cracks;
One drinks goode wine, the other never lacks.
Thus a debate one nighte between them rose:
Wineless his worship would no more repose
Than he would die of all his friends bereft,
Wheras his valet's eyelids could not close
Whyle in the bowle a single drop was left.

28. SONG

WHAT evil woes dull Hate maye breede
I wot not nor desire to wit,
But well I wot the wounds doe bleede
Since in my heart Love hath alit.
Love should bear other name more fit
That well were hight or flow'r or weede
Soe swift his blooms be blowne to seede.

Soe fleet, or weede or flow'r insyde
Her fickle heart wheron I dote;
In myne where he doth ever byde
O call him rock or starry mote!
For I doe ever live devote
To Love, and lovynge doe deryde
Death that maye never vail his pryde.

29. SONG

HE who with a random eye
  Of sweet joye would have his fill,
Let him on my Ladye spye
  Whom God keepe and guard from ill;
For she hath soe faire a grace
  That a thousand grievous cares
Fall from him that sees her face,
  More alsoe, if more he bears.

The great worth that is in her
  Is soe wonderful toe me,
Always in my heart a-stir
  Moves her gracious memorye;
The fine beautye of her face
  Makes me fear Death's dreadful whim,
Yet most surely must her grace
  Win for me respyte of him.

30. BALLADE OF MAYE AND OF VIRTUE

FULL gladlye in this month of Maye
  The Earth bestirs her and renews;
Each lover, his old fondness fey,
  Seeks otherwhere and hotly woos.
  Who in this wise his love pursues,
His head is light as anye feather;
  Another waye my heart doth use:
My love doth laste throughout alle weather.

Alle lovely cheekes doe wear awaye,
  And at the laste their beauty lose;

Tyme, grief, or sicknesse doe waylaye
And take them in a tightened noose.
But nothynge can or maim or bruise
Her whose true heart is taut in tether;
And for her beauty's fadeless hues,
My love doth laste throughout alle weather.

And she whose beauty thus doth staye
Is Virtue, childe of heavenly thews,
And to her shinynge height alwaye
True lovers with sweete voice she woos.
"Come, lovers, come!" ('Tis thus she sues),
"O long-besought, come round me gather"
(Such speech this happy mayde doth use),
"My love doth laste throughout alle weather."

Prince, get thee love of lastynge hues
And holde her faste in loyal tether,
Soe mayst thou boast, withouten ruse,
"My love doth laste throughout alle weather."

CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN

(1514–1589)

31. HAPPINESSE

WHO hath a well-built house both clean and comelye,
A garden with sweet flowers over-growne,
Good fruit, good wine, a child, a wyfe that dumblye
Yields all her dutye to her spouse alone;
Who hath nor debt, nor strife, nor love growne fickle,
Nor wealth to claim from those of kindred blood;

Who hath content that leaves the rich their mickle,
And a behavioure that is righte and good;
Who liveth simplye and without self-seekynge;
Who gives his heart to godlye exercise;
Who holds his servile passions from out-breakynge,
Who keeps his spirit free, his judgement wise;
Who counts his beads the whyle he tends his prunynge,
Doth fynde lyfe gentlye untoe death attunynge.

BOOK II

TO

HILAIRE BELLOC

PONTUS DE TYARD

(1521–1603)

32

SLEEPE, sire of rest and eke of dreams the sire,
  Nowe that the night's wide girth of darknesse dread
  O'er the still aire her mystie shroude hath spread,
Come, fill myne eyes, O Sleepe whom I desire.
For thy long absence doth my spirit tire,
  And sharper feels its hardship enduréd;
  Come, Sleepe and drowse it. Like a dupe, misled
Bye thy sweet falsehood, it maye seeme less dire.

Already Silence with her phantom horde
Broods o'er the darknesse of blynde nighte abhorr'd;
  Me only, faithful, dost thou leave forlorn.
Come, Sleepe desiréd, and my browes doe bynde,
  For I to thee an offerynge have sworn
Of nighte-shade with thy poppy-head entwyn'd.

PIERRE DE RONSARD

(1524–1585)

33

NOWE that the skiey space, the solid claye
  Feel icy fetters or hard-peltynge hail,
  And the stark horrour of the frozen gale
Stiffens the meadowe-grass to bristles graye;

Nowe that the wynde goes on his rebel waye,
Down-hurlynge rocks, up-rootynge trees that wail;
Nowe that the seas with swollen roar assail
Beleaguered coasts with their soe wrathful spraye;

Though Winter freezes all, the flames me fill
Of love that his harsh coldnesse cannot kill,
With mighte more strong than the rude season's holde.
Beholde ye lovers, my soe strange mishap
Who die of colde in Summer's kindlynge lap,
And burne to death in the chill heart of colde.

34

I SEND to thee a posie gatheréd
An hour agoe, its sweet buds open wide;
Who had not pluckt them ere the evenynge died,
Had found them fallen on the morrowe dead.
Therin thou mayst beholde thy beauty fled,
And a like end thy lovelinesse betide;
However thou mayst bear it in thy pride,
Like wither'd blossom it must soon be sped.

Tyme hasteth ever bye, O sweet ladye;
Alas! not Tyme, but we alone speed on,
And soone lie stark beneath the cold head-stone,
With our dead loves as out of mynde as we.
Then look upon me nowe full lovinglie,
Ere in the grave thy lovelinesse be gone.

35

YOU spiky gorse, you hollye thorn-beset,
One on the waste, the other in the wood;
Ivye that clothes the walls of caverns rude,
Sprynges that doe bubble from a sandy jet;
Pigeons that savoury kysses give and get,
Doves that doe wail their endlesse widowhood;
You warblynge nightyngales that ever brood
Or daye or night in amorous regret;

You red-throat swallowe, the mild season's guest,
If you doe see my ladye in this Sprynge
Amid the fresh green grass for flowers in quest,
Tell her I wait alone her deare comýnge,
And howe, so dire my need, without her blest,
I would to death with greater thanksgivýnge.

36

ON my return to thee (Ah me! my woe),
Thy kyss was frostye and as chill to taste
As bloodless lips that Death hath sealed, and chaste
As Dian on her brother mighte bestowe,
Or girl on grandam; the betroth'd doth soe
When by her chosen cavalier embrac'd,
Without or warmth, or moisture, or fond haste.
What! Is my lip then bitter as a sloe?

'Twere well thou hadst a lesson from the doves
That beak to beak pledge tenderly their loves,
Amid the branches in a long sweet bliss.
Nay, I implore thee Sweetheart myne, alack!
Kyss me with all thy heart within thy kyss;
And, if not soe, then holde thy kysses back.

37

SINCE she is frostye as the Winter aire,
Chillye as snowe that holds a heart of flint,
Who loves me onlye for her praise I print,
Why not quit fondnesse and my fatal faire?
Her name and grandeur are a net to snare
And hold me bounden to her service in't.
Mistresse, my locks have not soe graye a tint
But that another may finde pleasure there.

Love, like a wanton childe, hides not the truth:
You have not such rare lovelinesse in sooth
As makes it wise to turn true love awaye.
My April dayes will nevermore come back;
Then love me for the youth that I doe lack,
And I will love you when you too are graye.

38

WHEN thou art old and bye the fire alone
Bent o'er the candle thou dost twirl the skeine,
Then shalt thou quaver, with bewilder'd brayne
Howe Ronsard sang thy lovelinesse long gone.
Then if thy servant hear my lover's moan
Though toil doth drowse her, yet at that sweet strayne
She shall arise to honour thy dead swaine,
And give thy name immortal benison.

I shall be buried and long turned to claye
Under dark myrtle-trees wherbye I rest;
Whyle thou besyde the hearth with shrunken breast,
Bewail'st the love that thou didst spurn awaye;
Then hearken nowe to thy true love's behest:
Gather the roses of thy lyfe to-daye.

39. TO CASSANDRA

O MAYDE more tender yet
  Than shy sweet buds that wake
On rose-trees dewy wet
  When first the daye doth break,
That from the thorny speare
Half green, half red doe peere;

Faster than ivy clyngs
  With supple stems entwyn'd
Round the stout oak in ryngs
  A hundred-fold that bynd
With their fond arms and slym
The whole wide girth of hym,

Round me, O faire and fond,
  Let thyne arms make a ryng;
Link fast the gentle bond
  Of thy sweet tetheryng;
Let kysses givn and ta'en
For evermore remayne.

Not tyme nor envious dread
  Of other love more meet
Shall fynd me sunderéd
  From thy sweet lips, my sweet.
Thus kissynge will we dwell
Till lyfe bid us farewell.

The same moon, the same daye,
  And the same hour we two
Shall wander far awaye,
  Death's pallid house to view,
And those faire fields out-spread
For lovers haply wed.

Love's self amid the flow'rs
  Of everlastynge sprynge
Shall watch these loves of ours,
  Under the green boughs clynge;
And we shall knowe the good
Of gentle loverhood.

In fields of sedge and thyme,
  Along the level grounde,
With many a mazy chyme
  Accordant airs shall sounde;
While, featly to these tunes
A dancer swayes and swoones.

There heaven's unclouded space
  Shynes ever with clear light;
No serpent thro' the maze
  Spits venom in its spite;
For ever in those trees
Birds synge their melodies;

Soft wyndes for ever goe
  With gentle sound a-styr,
For ever laurels throwe
  Their coolynge shadowe there;
There lovely flowers do swaye
That never fade awaye.

Somewhere in the wyde space
  This happye garden covers
We two shall fynde our place
  Amid the throngynge lovers,
Unweariéd as these
In love's sweet ecstasies.

40

HERE is the wood wherof my angel sweete
Thrilled all the boughs in April with her song;
Here are the flowers that then felt her feete
When lonely in sweet thought she went along;
Here is the meadowe green wheron she stray'd
That lusty grew at wafture of her hande,
The soft enamel of the younglynge blade,
Where she made gentle pillage of the lande;
Here did she synge, and there her teares did flowe;
Here did she smile, and there her eyes transfixt
My soul soe deep that downe to death I goe;
Here sat she; there her mazy footsteps mixt:
On this frail loome thought-builded, Love doth weave
The shadowy raiment of the lyfe I live.

41

NOT sunrise that doth sette the rose a-fire,
Nor lilies growynge where the streame is thin,
Nor sounds of lute, nor birds' melodious din,
Nor costly gemmes held fast in golden wire,
Nor Zephyrs pantynge with soe warm desire,
Nor surge that round the tall ship's prowe doth spin,
Nor dance of Nymphs above the babblynge lin,
Nor all thynges blossomynge in Sprynge's attire,

Nor arméd camp with pointed lances spined,
Nor shady caverns with smooth mosses lined,
Nor forest boughes high-roofynge the greene maze,
Nor solemn silence of dumb rocks forlorne,
Give me such pleasure as a field unshorne
Where without hope my hopefulnesse doth graze.

42

AS you maye see upon the stem in Maye
The younglynge rose's lovely bud new-burst
Make heaven jealous of its hue when first
Dawn sprinkles dew upon the new-born daye:
Grace and sweet love within its leaves alwaye
Make gardens redolent, till it doth thirst
Too ardent for the rayne, and soon immerst
Dies, leaf by leaf, upon the witherynge spraye.

'Twas thus that thou, in thy first youthfulnesse,
When earth and heaven did thy beauty blesse,
Wast slayne by Fate and lower'd to thy tomb.
Take thou my sighes and teares for offerynge,
This bowle of milke, this basket full of sprynge,
That, live or dead, thy body rose-like bloom.

43. ON HIS CHOICE OF A GRAVE

CAVES, and streames that downward slyde
From the rockye mountain syde,
That toward the ground belowe
Fall and flowe;

And ye waves and forests greene
By meanderynge meadows seene,
And ye banks, and boughs that wave,
Hark my stave!

When both Heav'n and Tyme decyde
I no longer maye abyde,
But must hence be borne awaye
From the daye,

I forbid that men should break
Costlye marble for my sake,
Vainlye a faire stone to have
For my grave.

But in marble's stead a tree
I would have to shadowe me,
Wherupon the boughs are seene
Ever greene.

From my bodye maye there sprynge
Ivye roots and stems that clynge,
And about me be enwound
Round and round.

Maye the tendrils of the vine
Twist about this grave of myne,
Sheddynge lightly everywhere
Shadowes spare.

Maye the shepherds keep for aye
Every yeare my festal daye;
Maye both laddes and lambes be founde
Nigh my mounde.

Then the offys dulye said
And their tribute renderéd,
Maye they hail my shade and saye
In this waye:

"What renowne is thyne, O fane
Since within thy mound is lain
Him whose verses everywhere
Fill the aire!

"Him who whyle he dwelt with us
Never once grew envioús
Of the honours of the great
Lords of state.

"Naye, nor ever taught th' abuse
Of love's potion, nor the use
Of the art with magic blent
Ancïent;

"But bye meadoweland and wood
Showed the sacred Sisterhood
Tramplynge thro' the grasses tall
To his call.

"For he made from out his lyre
Such accordant sounds suspire,
Hallow'd with melodious words
Fields and herds.

"Maye sweet manna aye be shed
Where he nowe lies buriéd,
And the dewy balms that swaye
Nights in Maye.

"Round about him maye there sprynge
Grass, and waters murmurynge,
Ever green be one, and one
Flowynge on.

"We rememberynge his soe great
Fame doe yearly dedicate
Rites that else we doe assigne
Pan divine."

Thus shall shepherd laddes declare
Pourynge manye cupfuls there
O'er me in a mingled flood,
Milk, and blood

Of their youngest lamb, whyle I
In my new abode shall lie
Where the ransomed spirits meet
Joy complete.

Neither hail nor chillye snowe
To those regions can win thro',
There noe thunder-bolts accurst
Ever burst.

But for ever there doth last
Undespoil'd of blight or blast
Verdure; and for ever there
Sprynge is faire.

JOACHIM DU BELLAY

(1525–1560)

44

IF Lyfe's full span be but a daye that's sped
From out eternity; if years spin bye,
Drivynge our days before them hopelesslie;
If all thynges born be thus soe swiftlye fled,
Howe dost thou ponder, O soul emprisonéd?
Why takst thou pleasure in soe dark a sky,
Whenas thou art well-fledgéd and mayst fly
To brighter dwellynge, with strong wing dispread?

There is that good wherunto all doe presse,
  There is that ease wherfor all souls doe praye,
    There love is and sweet pleasure evermore,
There, O my soul, in everlastyngnesse,
  Beauty long-sought shall light thy lofty waye,
    And thou have syghte of that thou dost adore.

45

STRANGER that seekest Rome in Rome, and nought
  Of Rome in Rome mayst nowe perceive at all,
These palaces and arches long since wrought
  And crumblynge walls are what men Rome nowe call.
Beholde what pryde, what ruin! and howe she
  Beneath whose yoke the whole wyde world did bende
Was sometyme bound by her owne emperie
  And slaine by Tyme that maketh all thynges ende.
Rome is Rome's onlye monument to fynde,
  And Rome by Rome herself was over-throwne;
Tyber alone that to the sea doth wynde
  Remains of Rome. O world inconstant growne!
That which is firm is by Tyme's hand undone,
And that is flittynge doth resistlesse runne.

46

NOT the wild wrath of flames that skyward shoot,
  Nor ruthlesse cleavage of the conquerynge sword,
Nor madden'd soldiery a-thirst for loot,
  That oft, O Rome, hath plunder'd thy rich hoard,
Nor blowe on blowe of fickle Fortune's axe,
  Nor the slow rivynge of Tyme's thwarted steel,

Nor spite of men, nor jealous gods' attacks,
Nor traitorous mighte within the commonweal,
Nor the swift tumult of loud wynds that rave,
Nor the o'er-flowynge of old Tyber's tyde
That oftentymes hath drown'd thee in his wave,
Hath ought avail'd to lower thy great pryde
That with the relique of thy glorious days
Yet filleth all beholders with amaze.

47

THE Berecynthian in her chariot
Tower-crowned, from whose womb many Gods had birth,—
Such was this ancient citye in her mirth,
And proud of the full brood that she begot.
This citye ev'n the Phrygian's womb could not
Out-vie in progeny; o'er all the earth
Her mighty swaye out-topped all other worth
And had noe likenesse save her owne proud lot.

Rome had but Rome for righte belikenynge,
Rome had but Rome alone to cause her dread;
And, bye the eternal synod orderéd,
No human power had righte of challengynge
Her whose proud mighte did match the world's, whose head
Rose dauntlesse to the sky's environynge.

48

SLEEPE that most heavenlye of all boones is deemed,
Softer than honey sealed each weary lid,
When Love, full-laden with his pleasures, slid
Straight thro' the ivory gateway, and I dreamed.

As ivy twines a marble shaft, meseemed
Her alabaster bosom soe I did,
Like wanton willowes that the Loire bestrid,
Claspynge the fertile bankes wherbye he streamed.

Love's cruel flame that smote my drowsy blood
Set burnynge bye his swift-sped arrowe's kiss
Made my soule trespass on her lips of rose,
I on the brink of swift oblivion's flood,
When wakefulnesse, growne jealous of my bliss,
Did rouse sleep's warder and his doors unclose.

49

WHEN I could taste (as nowe no more maye be)
The honey sweete of thy soft syllables,
Thou hid'st thy heavenly face, thyne eyes whose
Doe holde me nowe in dire captivitie. [spells
Nowe when soe sorrowful a fate I dree
More deaf than a stunned shore loud ocean quells,
Then art thou fain of my colde shape that dwells
In outer solitude most shadowie.

What evil chance! Was stranger grief e'er tolde?
Nowe maye I see, as bye a limner made,
Her beauty wherof I am like to die;
Nowe maye I touch the smooth hand and beholde
The lovely eyes of her who mighte me aide,
Yet have not hearynge of her lightest sighe.

50. A THRESHER OF WHEAT TO THE WYNDES

TO you light troupe that ryde
On movynge wings and glyde
  Above the world and slake it,
And with your murmur soft
Move the green shade and oft
  With gentle tremors shake it—

For you I violets cull,
And flowers beautiful,
  These roses and these lilies,—
These roses all soe red
And newly openéd,
  These pinks and daffodillies.

Nowe with your gentle breath
Breathe on the plaine beneath,
  And lightly fan this meadowe,
Whyle I doe sweat and straine
At threshynge of my graine,
  And noon is without shadowe.

51

I HATE the Florentines' pelf-huntynge race,
  I hate the dull sense of the Siennese,
I hate Venetians for their double face,
  I hate the falsehood of the Genoese,
  I hate (but wot not why) the Ferrarese,
I hate the Lombards for their faithlesse grace,
And Naples peacocks for their pompous pace,
  And coward Romans for their slothful ease.

I hate rebellious Englyshman, brave Scot,
Burgundian traitor, and French blabbynge tongue,
And Spanysh pryde, and Germans at the bung:
I hate some vice in every lande I wot.
I hate my sinful self, but still more strong
I hate a pedant more than all the lot.

52

HAPPIE is he that from a faire voyáge
Comes home as came the travell'd Ulysses
Or him that raped the fleece, wayworn, in easé
With his owne kindred to live out hys age.
When shall I see agayne myne owne villáge,
My hearth's blue smoke? O when agayne shall
So weary eyes behold the home that is [these
More deare to me than a Duke's heritage?

Dearer to me my father's roofs that lean
Than any Roman palace's proud gates;
Dearer to me than marble the thin slates;
Dearer to me my Loire than Tyber's sheen,
Dwarf Lyre's top than the Palatinate's,
Soft Anjou aire than anye sea-breeze keen.

LOUISE LABÉ

(1526–1566)

53

WHILE that myne eyes with woeful teares doe flood
Lamentynge ever thy lost companie,
And while that, sighes and sobbynges sore withstood,
My voice maye still make falterynge melodie;

While that my tremblynge fingers yet maye thrill
The light lute string to tell thy gracious wayes;
While that my forlorn sprite hath all its will
In knowynge nought save thee and thy sweete
prayse;—
That while I will not chyde slow-comynge Death.
But when myne eyes are waterlesse for woe,
When my voice breaks, when my hande blunderéth,
And my soule in this world hath noe more showe
Of fond obeisance to thy love's deare swaye,
Then maye black Death make blynde my brightest
daye.

54

SCARCE on my yieldynge pillowe doe I bend
And fynde theron my soe desiréd rest,
Than my sad spirit from my heavynge breast
Straightwaye to thee doth fly, belovéd friend.
A dream to me thy seemynge self doth send
So long denied me, and my bosom blest
Holdes all the happinesse of long request
In sighes and teareful sobbynges without end.

O gentle sleepe, O solace of sweet Nighte,
O pleasant rest, soe full of such deep peace,
Take not awaye this dream that is my staye;
And, if my poor soule never maye have sighte,
Grant that my dream in slumber maye not cease
To brynge the happinesse denied by daye.

REMI BELLEAU

(1528–1577)

55. APRIL

APRIL, pryde of all the yeare
When appeare
  Leaves, and sap in fleecy bud
Gently stirs with hope to yield
Fruit fulfilled
  From the younglynges of the wood;

April, pryde of meadowe-sheene
Gold and greene,
  She whose lavish whim doth shed
Hues and flowers a thousand-fold
On the moulde
  In her glory garmented;

April, pryde of wyndes that sighe
Lightly bye,
  In whose fannynge her slim thread
Under boughs a snare doth weave
To bereave
  Flora of her maidenhead;

April, thy soft hande alone
Slips the zone
  Laying Nature's bosom bare,
Stored with odours and with flowers
That in showers
  Sweeten all the earth and aire;

April, pryde and pomp of Sprynge
Flourishynge
  On my Ladye's locks that meet
O'er her browes and on her bosom
Brimmed with blossom
  Thousand-fold and full of sweet;

April, on thy smilynge face
Love's own grace,
  Lure and rapture of sweet breath;
April, scent of Gods enshrined
On the wynde
  Sheddynge odour far beneath;

'Tis thy gentle summonynge
That doth brynge
  Back again the truant swallowes
That in Winter fled afar,—
They that are
  Heralds to the Sprynge that followes.

Thorny briar and thorny boughe
Blossom nowe;
  Lilies, pinks, and roses red,
That the sunny dayes do quicken
Throng and thicken
  In their lovely robes outspread;

And the nightyngale doth sweet
Songs repeat;
  In the shade he warbles long,
Breaks the lilt and links agayne
The sweet chayne
  Of his never-endynge song.

Love, when thou art haply come
No more numb,
  Breathes agayne with gentle breath,
And awakes the smoulderynge fire
Of desire
  That chill Winter smotheréth.

In this weather fresh and sunny
Bees mayke honey,
  Swarmynge all the sweets to sup;
Each from flow'r to flower dallies
Deep in chalice
  There to drink its odour up.

Maye perchance hath fresher wynde,
Softer rind
  On her fruits, and dews that bear
Manna and the sweet that thryves
In the hives
  Fostered by her gracious aire;

Yet my song I give to her
That doth bear
  Her faire name that founde her home
On the wavy sea that broke,
And awoke
  Into lyfe amid the foam.

ESTIENNE PASQUIER

(1529–1615)

56

THY sighte denied when deare to me,
A month to me seemed June to June,
And one sadde houre devoyde of boone
Was as a daye, or even three.
Nowe that no more thy selfe I see,
Since I for thee no longer swoone,
A single daye would seeme a moone,
Wert thou besyde for companie.

And yet thy beauty stayes as brighte
As when I found therin delighte,
Who am noe more in Cupid's pow'r.
'Tis sure that beauty doth not breede
Love, but that love doth sowe the seede
Of what we deem is beauty's flow'r.

OLIVIER DE MAGNY

(1530–1559)

57

HAPPYE the man beyonde the city's hail
Who lives on lande his fathers left him, where,
His peaceful husbandry his only care,
He hankers not for bliss beyond his pale.
He never knowes nor foode nor raiment fail,
But heedeth only that his tilth shall beare;
And, if his householde hath not noble ware,
Nor hath it burden of misfortune's bale.

Nowe doth he graft a tree, nowe doth he twine
Round stout elm-branches the unstable vine,
  Nowe breaks a dam to water his parched lawne;
Then home at evenynge with his smalle clan
He sups bye candle-lighte, a happye man
  Amid good cheere, and slumbers deepe till dawne.

ESTIENNE JODELLE

(1532–1573)

58

AS one astraye within the forest deepe,
  Far from the road, nor path nor grange in sighte;
  As one that on the sea doth dread the mighte
Of vast, wynd-vexéd waves that downward sweepe;
As one that wanders on the fields that sleepe,
  Without a starre, soe I in such sore plighte
  Have beene astraye without or path or lighte,
Like barque o'erwhelméd or bewilder'd sheepe.

But when I see, as they, my nighte o'er-worne,
  By forest, field or wave, the fold, the quay,
The boone seems greater than the evil borne.
Soe I who, lackynge thee, was thus forlorne,
  Forget at sighte of thy faire radiancie,
Forest and ocean, darke and tempest-torne.

JEAN-ANTOINE DE BAÏF

(1532–1589)

59. SPRING SONG

IDLE Winter's colde
  Nowe at last is spent;
Blithesome Sprynge beholde
  Full of ravishment.

Earth is fledged with greene
  Full of buds aswaye;
Leafage maykes a screene
  In the woodlande waye.

Lighte of foot, the girl,
  She no slug-a-bed,
Ere the rose unfurl,
  Plucks its drowsy head;

Soe she comelier seeme
  With the bud on breast,
Or the rose she deem
  For her lover best,

In his hande toe tayke
  As a pledge of troth,
And with kissynge slake
  Love that's never loth.

Listen from the pale,
  Shepherd's pipe that shrill
Makes the nightyngale
  Sweeter sorrowe spill.

See the waves that flowe
  Crispéd in the brooks,
Trees with greene aglowe
  In their glassy looks.

Nowe the sea is soft,
  Stay'd and smooth the wind
Makes the sailes to waft
  Vessels untoe Ind.

Nowe have all birdes sweet
  Song with voices suave,
Larks above the wheat
  Swannes upon the wave;

Swallowes round the roof,
  Nightyngales that nest
In the woods aloof,
  Synge nor ever rest.

Sorrowe and content
  Of my love I'll synge,
An his flame be spent
  Or still wantonynge.

Why then should I quell
  Songs that over-brim
When all thynges up-well
  With the season's whim?

GUY DE TOURS

(?)

60

I HAVE noe eyes save when on her I looke,
Nor noe desire save that she doth beget,
Nor anye sighs save when by her forsooke,
Nor anye thought save it be on her set.
Soe deeply is she printed on my braine,
There is nought else of worth untoe my minde;
All speech of other ladies seemeth vaine,
As that to me another should be kinde;
I have noe feet save unto her I wend,
I have noe hands save when her owne I feel;
I have noe heart save with her owne to blend,
Nor ought at all save what from her I steal,
Who am not myself, soe much from her I borrowe
Whose long unkindnesse worketh my great sorrowe.

JEAN DOUBLET

(?)

61

MESEEMETH that soe manye shafts be notte
In the full quiver of all England's front,
As Love the archer over me hath shotte
Unwearied in his hunt.

Sheltered amid the sacred maidens nine
Whom he is said to fear, still doth he come;
Beneath the waters of their spring divine
His arrowes still strike home.

I goe my waye, but am by him out-sped;
I fly, but never does the hunt growe slack.
Still in my heart his cruel shaft growes red,
Altho' I turn my back.

JEAN PASSERAT

(1534–1602)

62. ODE FOR THE FYRST OF MAYE

QUIT thy bed and sleepe of twilight
On this tyde,
Nowe for us the dawn's red skylight
Opens wyde;
Heaven hath a smilynge face
Ever in this moone of grace;
Sweete, draw nigh!
Let us kindle love and kiss,
In this world he lives a-miss
That letteth love goe bye.

Come with me and leave the rabble;
Under trees
Let us hark the shy birdes babble
Melodies;
Let us listen to the stave
That the nightyngale soe suave
Doth prolong;
Ev'n as he doth with his voice
Banish sorrowe and rejoice;
Brief must be our song.

Tyme that wills not we should marry
And be blithe,
In his flight our youth doth harry
With his scythe.
Graye of hair, upon a daye
In thy sorrowe thou shalt saye
"Foolish girl!
Howe hast thou with sad unthrift
Squandered all thy beauty's gift
On old Tyme the churl!"

Leave we then our teares, and gather
Ere it fade,
The sweet flower of youth together,
Man and mayde;
Heaven hath a smilynge face
Ever in this moone of grace;
Sweete, draw nigh!
Let us kindle love and kiss.
In this world he lives a-miss
That letteth love goe bye.

63. VILLANELLE

I HAVE lost my turtle fleet:
Is that her owne voice blowne bye?
After her I fayne would beat.

Dost thou sorrowe for thy sweet?
Soe, alack-a-daye, do I!
I have lost my turtle fleet.

If thy love hath constant heat,
Soe my faith burns steadily:
After her I fayne would beat.

Doth thy mournful playnte repeat?
Even soe I heave my sighe:
I have lost my turtle fleet.

Since noe more my love I meet,
Nothynge lovely I espy:
After her I fayne would beat.

Death whom daily I entreat,
Take thyne owne and let me die:
I have lost my turtle fleet,
After her I fayne would beat.

64. ON THE DEATH OF THULÈNE THE KYNGE'S JESTER

SIRE, Thulène is dead. I have seen his grave;
Yet mighte you raise him from his coffin narrowe;
Give to the poet what to the fool you gave:
Poet and fool are born of the same marrowe.
One flys ambition and the other flouts;
Both get poor worth for what is in their purses;
Their easye humour quicklye smyles or pouts;
One's speech is heedlesse as the other's verses.
One hath a green head, and the other goes
Clad in a prettye cap of greene and yellowe;
One synges you sonnets whyle the other's toes
Move to the sound of his owne bells, poor fellowe.
In this unlike: Fortune to fools makes offers,
But unto poets brynges but emptye coffers.

VAUQUELIN DE LA FRESNAYE

(1535–1607)

65. SONG

LOVE be mute, but take thyne arc,
  For my wild and lovelye deer,
In the dawn or in the dark
  Passeth near.

Here be foot-prints. Lo! her shape.
  To her heart thyne arrowe speed.
Miss her not lest her escape
  Mock thy deed.

Woe is me! 'Tis blynde thou art!
  O the cruel drops that draine!
Far she flies nor feels thy dart:
  I am slaine.

66

O PLEASANT wynde whose balmye breath doth fill
  The aire with perfume that these flowers doe freight!
O happye field wheron the teares did spill
  Of gentle lovers when unfortunate!
O shadye woode, O runnynge river swifte
  That out of wretchednesse saw joye aryse,
Pure bliss ensuinge on their long unthrift,
  And each in other's perfect love growne wyse.
Nowe age hath purged them of all carnal neede;
  And, moved bye holye thoughts to thrust behynde

The love wheron their sinful soules did feede,
Still doe they feel their weanéd hearts growe kynde
When their dim eyes beholde, with waverynge looke,
This wynde, thys woode, this field, this runnynge brooke.

GUILLAUME DU BARTAS

(1544–1590)

67. THE PYRENEES

FRENCHMAN, halt here awhyle nor leave this lande
Where Nature a soe rockye wall doth rear,
That Ariège cleaves with his impetuous hande,
A countrye that in beautye hath no peer.
Pilgrym, 'tis not a mountayne thou dost see
But a Briareus vast whose loftye girth
Doth holde the pass against his enemie,
Near Spaine from France, and France from Spanysh earth.
One arm in France, the other in Spaine set,
As Atlas on his head he hath like weighte;
Within two seas his separate feet are wet;
The forests dense are locks upon his pate;
The rocks his bones are, and the rivers roarynge
The eternal sweat of travail downward pourynge.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES

(1546–1606)

68. VILLANELLE

ROSETTE, because I stayed awaye
A little whyle, you wanton grew,
And I who knew how you did swaye,
Theron was fayne noe more of you.
Noe more such fickle lovelinesse
Shall holde me captive in its net:
We soone shall see, light shepherdesse,
Which shall be first to know regret.

Whyle in vaine teares my lyfe I lose
And doe bemoan my lonely fate,
You who doe love by simple use,
Have fond arms for another mate;
Noe weather-vane more swiftly veers
Before the wind than you, Rosette:
We soone shall see whose love outwears—
Which shall be first to knowe regret.

Where are your holye promises,
And where are nowe your farewell woes?
And could such sorrowe-laden cries
Come from a heart that gaddynge goes?
Pardie! but you're a lyinge lasse,
And curst the man whose trust you get!
We soone shall see, light shepherdesse,
Which shall be first to knowe regret.

He who doth tayke the sweets were myne
Lacks wit to woe as well as I,

And she I love is far more fine
In beauty, love and loyaltie.
Holde closely then your new-found swaine;
This love of myne is firmly set,
And then we soone shall see, of twaine,
Which shall be first to knowe regret.

69. OF A FOUNTAYNE

CHILL is the fount whose gentle streame doth carrye
Tidynges of love as silverly it flowes
Thorough green stalkes that on the brink doe tarrye
Beneath the shadowe that the alder throwes.
Lithe boughs in the low wynde with soft complainynge
Make love-lorn sighes within that cool retreat;
Whyle the hot sun, his topmost height attainynge
Doth crack the earth with his soe ardent heat.
Pilgrym that on the hard high road hath wended,
Sorely athirst beneath the beames that blaze,
Here let thy wearinesse awhyle be ended;
Here take thyne ease awhyle from dustye wayes;
In the cool aire and shade thy heat forsakynge
Where the chill fountayne for thy thirst hath slakynge.

70. ON THE DEATH OF DIANA

AS you maye see the sudden lightnynge smite
A cloudy pathwaye and wane out on it,
This blesséd soul, unmarked of mortal wit,
Hath left her young heart's dwellynge for the lighte.
My thought hath follow'd, in default of sighte
Up to heaven's arches with her presence lit,
And seen howe in the glowe where she doth sit
She grieveth for me here in the world's nighte

O Goddesse, wait no more! the time is come,
Now that thy dust is coffin'd and thy tomb
Doth wear the tribute woven of my love;
For, havynge honoured thee with this sad rite,
Weary of teares and misery infinite,
I leave the earth and fly to thee above.

CATHERINE DES ROCHES

(1550–1587)

71. QUATRAIN ON ACHILLES

ACHILLES chose a meaner task when he
Threw downe the distaff and took up the sworde:
One weaves the raiment of humanitye,
The other slits the corde.

THEODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ

(1551–1630)

72. SONNET TO THE KYNGE

SIRE, your dogge Lemon, once your bed-fellowe,
Nowe hath the bare ground for his nightly stead;
That same true dogge that, by his instinct led,
Leal friends from traitors did soe rightly knowe.
His voice it was that frighted robbers soe,
His teeth gript murderers; discomforted,
Why hath he harde blowes and a beggar's bed,
The wonted wage that royal kynges bestowe?

His pryde, his beauty, and his winsome youth
Made you to love him; but he had noe ruth
For your ill-wishers whose bold steps he barr'd.
Ye courtiers proude beholdynge haughtilie
This outcast dogge that in the streets doth die,
On your devotion waits a like rewarde.

BOOK III

TO KATHERINE T.

Puck's whim once made an ass of man,
  As swine he grunted, changed by Circe;
And even so translators can
  Misrender poets without mercy.

I have not Orpheus' skill, but try
  To mimic in my tongue French singers,
And guard lest I should pull awry
  Their harp-strings with un-nimble fingers.

Here take what I have done, dear friend,
  My fairer Circe, void of malice;
And proffer me the sweets that blend
  For my translation in your chalice.

And may you find my faults are few,
  And my toil-gotten rhymes well-mated:
This book I dedicate to you
  Who, in a day, my life translated.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE

(1555–1628)

73. CONSOLATION TO M. DU PÉRIER

AND must thy grief, Du Périer, knowe no end?
And the sad counselling
Brought to thee fatherlike by thyne old friend
But make more sharp its sting?

The sorrowe of thy daughter borne awaye
By Death that comes to all,
Is it a maze wherein thy mind doth straye,
There lost beyond recall?

I knowe what winning wayes, deare child, were hers,
Nor ever would I stem
In churlish wise, the falling of thy teares
By misbeholding them.

But of this world she was where things most glad
Have ever hardest doom;
And as a rose she lived a daye who had
A rose's lovely bloom.

And had she lived as thou didst pray she mighte,
Laden with yeares to wane
At last with all her gold hair turned to white,
What then had been her gaine?

Deemst thou that Paradise, an she were old,
For her had shone more faire,
Or lighter laine on her the chillye mould
Or worms that burrowe there ?

No, no, deare friend! for Fate drives instantlye
The soul from out its ark:
Age, in that setting forth leaves not the quay
To followe the dim barque.

Fate's most unfeeling fingers ply the sheares.
Vainly on her we call;
Sternly to all our cries she stops her eares,
And will not heed at all.

The frugal hind that under thatch doth dwell
Obeys her summoning;
And at the Palace gate the sentinel
Saves not our Lord the Kynge.

All murmurs 'gainst her, all despair or wrath
Will bring us no release;
To yield unto God's will is the one path
Can lead us unto peace.

74. ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON

FOR that my son hath lost his mortal shrine,
This deare, brave lad on whom I did so dote,
I do not saye that destiny mis-wrote,
Since at the last must every life decline.
But that two crafty rascals bye design
Cut short his dayes with their fell blades that smote,—
Therein my grief noe solace finds to quote,
And all my soule doth in my grief repine.

O God, my Saviour, since of simple neede
My soule's deep wound for evermore must bleede,
The vowe of vengeance is a righteous vowe.
With thy strong arms upholde and strengthen me;
Deal thou thy justice for their felon blowe,
Sons of the ruffians who did murder Thee.

MADEMOISELLE DE GOURNAY

(1566–1645)

75. QUATRAIN ON A PICTURE OF JOAN OF ARC

"HOW canst thou reconcile, O heavenly mayde,
Thy melting glances and thyne eager blade?"
"My soft eyes on my darling country beam;
My sword doth smite her freedom to redeem."

MATHURIN RÉGNIER

(1573–1613)

76. STANZAS

SINCE thyne eye so ardently ashine with love's own splendour
First within my loyal heart hath kindled all of tender,
Since, as tho' a saintly star, I worship at thy feet,
Come, why not love me, Sweet?

Since thy loveliness that erstwhile renders thee unyielding
Must, like any wither'd flower under grass for shielding,

Shrink from savage tempests storming after
summer's heat,
Come, why not love me, Sweet?

Wilt thou let thyne eye begetting all of love's warm
pleasure
Be to thy sweet self no other than a useless treasure?
Since Love like a god in every living heart doth beat,
Come, why not love me, Sweet?

Dost thou wait a distant morrowe for thy deare
regretting?
Thus thou wilt with fortune's hazard tease my lorn
heart's frettynge.
Since in a so mellowe season our two lives do meet,
Come, why not love me, Sweet?

If thy beauty be so great that there be none com-
paring,
Heaven not created it for my poor heart's despair-
ing,
Since meseems it hath compassion when we do
entreat,
Come, why not love me, Sweet?

77. A CONFESSION IN BRIEF

SINCE sev'n sins from these our eyes
Bar the gates of Paradyse,
Holy father, if truth's in me,
I'll abhor them everywhere,
An thou wilt but to me spare
Haste and lust that so do win me.

These in me are Nature's flaw,
These nor precept, nay, nor law
Nor your nimble speech can alter;
And when simple sorrowe might
Save me from my sinful plight,
Whim would make my lips to falter.

I have tried to foil them oft
With a *Pater Noster* soft,
With a Bible text to smother;
In the midst of combats fell,
Voices soothe mine ire and tell
Howe kind Nature is their mother.

'Tis not God hath giv'n me these
To augment mine enemies,
But a new Pandora sowing
With her own hand far and wide,
As a bane for human pride,
This strange falsehood in me growing.

For no saint, howe'er devout,
Firm and zealous could put out
Such a blaze of sinful fuel;
Carmelite, Celestine pure
Never could 'gainst such a lure,
Keep unbroke a law so cruel.

Do thou then as I have claimed,
Soe that, firm and unashamed,
I've a conscience clean within me,
As of old the Saints were knowne:
From the sev'n sins take alone
Haste and lust that so do win me.

78. HIS OWN EPITAPH

I LIVED a life was fancy free,
Slowe-drifting on contentedly
  Adowne the road my feet did find;
And wherefore Death should think of me
I cannot guess, since steadily
  I alwayes kept him out of mind.

FRANÇOIS MAYNARD

(1582–1642)

79

HOWE faire a destiny 'twould be
  If after death love still might thrive
And followe to the grave with me,
  For then with death I would not strive.
But Death, I fear, when he dismembers,
Will leave no flame in Love's dead embers.

Nowe only death I do desire
  Since that thy so unstable mind
For me hath quenched its fickle fire.
  The daye I hate and all mankind;
And, if in life I still am sighing,
'Tis but to save my love from dying.

80. EPITAPH

HERE lies a toper drank more wine
  Than any other man was able;

He had no faith in Gods divine
Save him that haunts a tavern table.

He dropt into yon river's slime—
A clumsy boatman caused the ripple.
This was the first and only time
He took plain water with his tipple.

THÉOPHILE DE VIAU

(1590–1626)

81. THE BOATMEN

DARLING little wingéd boys are clinging to our skulls,
Tritons in their envy full of fondness swarming near;
Now the wind grows gentle and the surging billow lulls,
Lapsing on a stilly tide wherever we may steer.

The wheeling stars smile down from heaven to help us as we go,
No storm can daunt our sailor-lads, nor make their cheeks turn pale,
And never doth the bird of calm nest smooth amid the flow
Without a glance as he goes by to bless the flapping sail.

Our Ocean is as gentle as the flood Euphrates bears;
Not Pactolus nor Tagus with so rich a wave can bless;

Here never pilot dreads to meet with crafty buccaneers,
Nor knows such long unbroken calm as leads to weariness.

Here underneath a gentle sky, and far from thunder's roar,
The leisurely slow watches bring us nought but smoothest ease,
And here our eyes no yearning know to greet again the shore,
But pity the poor angel throng that sail not on such seas.

O you for whom love sighs and sighs, dear beauties still unwed,
Come share with us the happiness that rides where'er we go;
And we will swear to all the world that never sails were spread
Above a ship with such a prize betwixt her stern and bow.

MARC-ANTOINE DE SAINT-AMANT

(1594–1661)

82. THE RISING SUN

GODDESS of the rosy hue
Holy unto Eastern eyes,
Rose of dawn that doth renew
Ere thy sire the Sun doth rise,
Bring the daylight unto me
So that I my love may see.

Sure the night is overworn;
  Shrill the cocks salute the sun;
Mount the golden car of morn
  Drawn by hours that swiftly run,
Haste and come that all may scan
How thou paintest heaven's span.

Gentle beam of my desire
  I behold thee. Welcome here!
Heavenly thy beauty's fire
  On the cloud doth now appear,
And thy star with pallid light
Makes the Eastern mountains bright.

DENIS SANGUIN DE SAINT-PAVIN

(1595–1670)

83. EPIGRAM

TIRCIS makes rhymes as fast as ticking;
  Mine with good cause find slower birth:
For his will die while still he's kicking,
  But mine will live when I'm in earth.

VINCENT VOITURE

(1598–1648)

84. RONDEAU

IN good plain French your words devoutly rise
More solemn than a monkey could devise;
Your soul aye finds so little that doth please,
We well might think our France and all her sees
Turned round your reverend worship pivot-wise.

For every matter you have bigot sighes,
For all our wickedness teares fill your eyes;
You hide your Spanish heart in homilies
Of good plain French.

Then leave our State untroubled of your cries;
A worthy sailor-man the rudder plies:
For, if we must speak frankly at our ease,
Although your mind is full of subtleties,
That you're a blockhead we all realize
In good plain French.

PIERRE CORNEILLE

(1606–1684)

85. STANZAS TO THE MARQUISE

MARQUISE, if on my face you spy
Some trace of Time's unsparing graver,
Remember when as old as I
You'll hardly showe a fairer favour.

For Time doth take in ruthless holde
The loveliest things that we do cherish;
As he hath lined my forehead old,
So he will make your roses perish.

The same swift planets in their course
Draw on our dayes and nights unceasing;
My face was once as fair as yours,
And yours must soon like mine be creasing.

Yet have I dazzling charms to fright
The stern aspéct of Time's deploying,
And give me courage to despite
The onward march of his destroying.

Your charms by all are worshippéd;
But those that you esteem so lightly
May well endure when yours are dead,
And all your beauty growne unsightly.

They may bestowe undying fame
On eyes that unto me are dearest,
And in a thousand yeares proclaim
The beauty that for me thou wearest.

And that new race beyond the grave
To what I write shall render credit,
And you shall have no beauty save
As I alone have sung or said it.

Then ponder well, my fair Marquise:
Though silvery hairs do so affright you,
Yet such as I 'twere well to please
Whose printed word may bless or blight you.

PAUL SCARRON

(1610–1660)

86. HIS OWN EPITAPH

HE who underground doth slumber
Few men envied, many pitied,
Suffered deaths withouten number
Ere at last this life he quitted.
Friend, let not your footsteps jar on
This his grave lest you awake him;
For 'tis the first night poor Scarron
Felt sound slumber overtake him.

ISAAC DE BENSERADE

(1612–1691)

87. FOR MADAME

WHEN you beholde her graciousness and glory,
The beauty of her features, the splendour of her birth,
Like to the goddesses of early Grecian story
Would you not take her for Juno come to earth?

When you behold how all are fain to serve her,
When in her company how all men have adored,
Her eyes that are shining with all grace and loving fervour,
Would you not take her for Venus' self restored?

Pallas it is that in her body dwelleth
Masking all her pride in her gentleness of soul,
Never showing on her brow the haughty frown that quelleth,
Keeping her heart and her noble spirit whole.

Were Paris here to give again his favour,
Swift would be his choosing now since without despite,
She alone would share the apple that he gave her
With these three goddesses that in her soul unite.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE

(1621–1695)

88. THE GRASSHOPPER AND THE ANT

THE Grasshopper that through the Summer
Her cymbals beat, [heat
Found her bare board without a crumb
And the chill wynd of Winter come.
Not one tiny shred of fly
Nor of earth-worm could she spy.
Off she went her plight bewailing
To the Ant beyond the railing,
Begging food enough to save
Her shrivell'd body from the grave
Till the boughs again were shady.
" I'll repay," pronounced my Lady,
" Ere hot August come, your loan
With the interest due thereon."
Now the Ant likes not to lend,
(A small fault wherein she strayes),

"How fared you in your Summer dayes?"
Said she to her needy friend.
"Unto all, sun high or setting,
I did sing, save your displeasure."—
"Did you then? I'm g'ad you'd leisure!
Well, now start your pirouetting."

89. THE RAT WHO WITHDREW FROM THE WORLD

AMONG Levantine legends you maye find
One of a rat worn out with worldly strife
Who in the hollow of a round Dutch rind
Withdrew to lead a cloistral life.
The solitude was audible
Round the deep arches of his cell.
The hermit made his living in the husk.
Soe well he wrought with toe and tusk,
That soon within his cell's dark core
Was ample victualling. What would you more?
The rat grew s'eek. (The Lord doth bless alwayes
Whom to his saintly service vow their dayes.)
One daye a godly caller bore,
As leading counsellor among the rats,
For some small alms his government's behest:
They had decided on a foreign quest
To seek for help against the horde of cats
Ratopolis did whelm;
With empty pockets they had left,
Since of all money was bereft
The cat-beleaguered realm.
They asked small tribute, counting that such aid
Would be forthcoming ere five suns should fade.
"My friends," replied the lonely man,
"I meddle not in sub-celestial feud:

What can a poor soul in its solitude
To help you forward in your plan
But pray to heaven for the help you need ?
And may the Lord thereunto give full heed.''
And, having answered thus, full piously
The new saint shut his door (and turned the key).

* * * * *

Whom do you think that I so, with craft,
Show as a niggardly rat for parity ?
A monk ? Why no, but a dervish daft:
For I take it a monk is all loving charity.

90. THE DONKEY LOADED WITH RELICS

SOME relics on a donkey being tied,
The beast imagined as he proudly strode,
Men bowed unto himself and not his load,
And thought their ''Aves'' to himself applied.
Some one who saw his error said aloud
''Dull donkey, do not let your mind grow proud
With such an idle whim.
Incense and hymn
Are for the holy relics that you carry,
And these alone deserve such adoration.''

Men bow not to an ignorant functionary,
But only to his circumstance and station.

91. THE OAK AND THE REED

''YOU have good cause to weep your fate,''
Unto the slender reed the oak once said:
''A wren for you must seem a dreadful weight;
The least wind that doth spread

A ripple on the stream in spate,
Makes your poor head grow pliant.
Whereas my brow like to a lofty hill
Not only takes the sunbeams as they spill,
But to the storm's defiant.
Winds that to you are blasts, to me are sighs.
Still, did you spring where my boughs make a shield
Of leaves above the field
You need not know such agonies:
I would defend you when the thunder pealed.
But often on the humid brink you grow
Of realms where the winds blow.
Nature to you indeed seems very harsh."
"Your pity," said the poor reed of the marsh,
"Is kindly meant. But don't be too soft-hearted.
To you the winds bear a more dreadful spite:
I bend, but break not. So far you have thwarted
The awful blows wherewith they smite
Your stout trunk still unbending. . . .
But bide your time." Scarce had he made an ending
When from the horizon wildly blown
The most fell blast did speed
That ever yet the icy Pole did breed.
The tree stood steadfast, while the reed bent down.
With double effort then
The wind his roots up-tore
Whose lofty head unto the clouds did soar
Whose feet were buried in the dust of men

92. THE ASS CLOTHED IN THE LION'S SKIN

FEAR fled before a wily Ass that clad
In lion's skin his head and shoulders;
Though little might the creature had,
He frightened all beholders.

An ear-tip showing to observant eyes
Made plain the sham of his disguise;
And straightway Martin set him running.
But those still blinded by his cunning
Were much amazed his lash should dare
Drive back the lion to his lair.

* * * * *

How many folks who make a stir in France
Remind us daily of the fabled Ass:
Vain pomp, alas!
The only witness of their valiance.

JEAN-BAPTISTE POQUELIN DE MOLIÈRE

(1622–1673)

93. TO M. LE VAYER ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON

WEEP on Le Vayer, make thine eyes an urn,
Thou hast good reason for thine éxtreme woe,
Wisdom herself would let her tears o'er-flowe
If her own loss were such as thou dost mourn.
Vainly with idle precept the forlorn
Strive to behold dry-eyed their loved ones goe
All Nature deems it but a heartless showe,
And eyes such crude barbarity with scorn.

Too well we knowe no weeping can make whole
The dear son whom too sudden Death did reap.
Not therefore doth the blowe less sharply smite:
All men revered him for his virtuous soul,
Large-hearted, lofty-minded, full of light,
And for these things we must for ever weep.

PHILIPPE QUINAULT

(1635–1688)

94. THE SONG OF PLUTO

ALL men this path must tread;
Life doth but lead
To Death's reprieve.
Thereby a hundred woes are thrown aside;
Who still would bide
But seeks the more to grieve.

Draw near the darkness of this nether shore;
The rest ye so do crave
Is not for mortals save
Unto Death's harbour ye be ferried o'er.
All souls at last have place within this gloom;
All hither come
And hence pass out no more.

This is the law that bindeth all alive;
The might wherewith ye strive
Makes but a vain effórt.
Say, wise is he
That shuns the peril of this sea?
It is a storm to drive
The ship unto her port.

JEAN RACINE

(1639–1699)

95. HYMN TRANSLATED FROM THE ROMAN BREVIARY

GREAT God at whose divine word of command
The heavens did arise,
Thou settest borders to the seas, and spann'd
With thine unmeasured skies.

Ev'n as the heavenly arch hath liquid plains,
The earth hath streams that run
And to the arid meadows bear their rains
In time of parching sun.

Lord, like the waters let thy grace down fall
To heal us in thy tide,
That from this day our sense be no more thrall
To snares the world doth hide.

And of thy faith send the propitious beams
Upon our eyes to burst,
And tear the mask from the infernal schemes
Of wickedness accurst.

Eternal Father, Son, all wisdom's source,
And Spirit, God of peace,
That dost control of Time th' inconstant course,
Reign on and never cease.

GUILLAUME AMFRYE, ABBÉ DE CHAULIEU

(1639–1720)

96. TO THE SOLITUDE OF FONTENAY

'MID these hamlets and these woods
Life itself at last I find;
Here my soul no longer broods
On my sorrows left behind.

Fontenay delightful where
My young eyes first saw the sun,
Soon unto my sires I'll fare
When the race of life is run.

Muses who beside this lawn
Nourished me with kindly breath,
Trees that saw my young life dawn
You shall see it wane in death.

Yet 'tis wise to breathe the air
In the shadow of your boughs
Tearless, and my soul prepare
For that dark and awful house,

Where of all the trees that I
Set within the grove to wave
There shall follow when I die
Cypress only to my grave.

CHARLES RIVIÈRE DU FRESNY
(1648–1724)

97. THE NEXT DAYS

FAIR Phyllis, more niggard than coy,
  On getting no gain by denying,
For twenty fine sheep of her boy
  Once offered a kiss for his buying.

The next day to bargain once more:
  The shepherd found things in his favour,
Demanding of kisses a score
  For every sheep that he gave her.

The next day fair Phyllis was fain,
  And fearing her shepherd's displeasure,
In haste gave his flock back again
  For a kiss that he paid her at leisure.

The next day her passion so drave,
  Dog and sheep she'd have given unto him,
For a kiss that for nothing he gave
  To Lizette who had started to woe him.

JEAN-BAPTISTE ROUSSEAU

(1670–1741)

98. LOVE

LOVE comes not by trying,
  Love's a jealous God;
On himself relying,
  Men must wait his nod.
All own his prerogative;
He alone doth lawless live.

In the frozen fallows
  Flora's throne doth rise;
Wind drives home the swallows,
  And the wind's self dies:
Love alone when he takes wing
Turns not home from wandering.

FRANÇOIS-MARIE AROUET DE VOLTAIRE

(1694–1778)

99. TO MADAME LULLIN

AND doth my agéd Muse forlorn
  Surprise you that she still is able,
Though eighty winters she hath borne,
  To quaver lines of ode or fable ?

Sometimes a plot of green will spring
  In wintry fields the frost makes hoary,

Spared but a while as comforting
The summer season's faded glory.

A bird may warble an he will,
With all his brave days left behind him,
But in his song shall sound no thrill
Of tender love that once did bind him.

'Tis thus I touch the worn-out strings
That foil these fingers once untiring,
'Tis thus I try this voice that sings
E'en though the singer be expiring.

"I would in death's farewell, my Queen,"
(Tibullus to his mistress sighing),
"Fix mine eyes on thine own, and e'en
Would clasp thee with the hand that's dying."

But when we feel life ebb apace,
The soul borne on beyond retrieving,
Then have we eyes for Delia's face,
Or hands to fondle her we're leaving?

Man must forget in such a plight
The deeds that in his haleness please him;
And when was ever mortal wight
Content to feel Death's fingers seize him?

And even Delia, when in turn
She lies with endless night around her,
Forgets the beauty made men yearn,
And love that all through life enwound her.

Birth, life, and death are ours, sweetheart,
And none doth know how he came hither.
Each out of nothingness doth start;
Where doth he go? . . . God knoweth whither.

100. TO M. GRÉTRY

YOUR songs Paris honoured of late,
The Court has rewarded with jeers.
Alas! that the ears of the great
Are so often such very great ears.

101. FOR A STATUE OF LOVE

WHOE'ER you are, you here your master see:
He is, or was, or very soon shall be.

102. ON JEAN FRÉRON

THE other day while in the dale our friend did fare on
A hidden serpent chanced to sting poor Johnny Fréron.
And then what think you followed on this evil spiting?
The serpent burst in agony and died of biting!

PONCE-DENIS ECOUCHARD LEBRUN

(1729–1807)

103. DIALOGUE BETWEEN A POOR POET AND THE AUTHOR

I HAVE just been robbed of papers!—I am sorry for your grief.
Yes, of all my hand-writ verses!—O! I'm sorry for the thief.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS DUCIS
(1733–1816)

104. TO MY BROOK

BROOK little known whose waters run
  Along a wild and hidden bed,
Like thee the busy world I shun
  And love the wilderness instead.

Brook in forgetfulness now drown
  The sorrows of my past forlorn,
And leave within my soul alone
  The peace that on thy tide is borne.

Thy banks are dear to lilies pale
  And to the lowly marguerite;
And by thy stream the nightingale
  Doth warble out his passion sweet.

And nigh thee from the soul in peace
  Doth fall the burden of its sin;
Thou all its sorrow dost release
With murmurs of thy tuneful lin.

When may I in drear autumn days
  Along the course of thy clear stream
Hear the soft sound of shaken sprays
  Or the lone lapwing's plaintive scream?

Ah! how I love this ancient shrine,
  These walls whereon the flames have fed,
These pious bells that still repine
  With wistful music overhead!

Now on the road a mother heeds
Their summoning, far wanderéd;
Her little daughter whom she leads
Says " Amen ! " as she bows her head.

Where dwelt a vestal sisterhood
Once saw I cloister'd rivers run
That poured their solitary flood
By altars of the Holy One.

Their crystal waters wanderéd
By arch and plinth in mystic wise
Where these fair angel-girls did tread
The blesséd fields of Paradise.

My humble brook thy stream in flight—
So short a life is ours below—
Reminds me, thine own eremite,
How Time's swift stream doth ever flow.

EVARISTE DE PARNY

(1754–1801)

105. ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG GIRL

SHE was a childe or hardly more;
She smiled like Innocence and wore
The light on Love's own face aglow.
Few were the moons—the suns in sooth
Ere her unsullied heart would know
His fondness break the seal of youth.
But Heaven unto Death did doom
The beauty of her early bloom.
Then unto Heaven did she yield
Her life, and soft her eyelids sealed

Without a sound of murmuring heard:
Just as a smile wanes out at will,
Or bird's song from a drowsy bill
That leaves the woodland boughs unstirred.

ANDRÉ CHÉNIER

(1762–1794)

106. A YOUNG MAN

I WAS a mite when she was tall and fair;
She smiled on me and bid me nigh her chair.
Perched on her lap my childish hand would glide
Over her hair, her face, her bosom's pride,
While her hand sometimes, fondling and forbearing,
Would feign to chide me for its wanton faring.
And she was kindest when before her bowed
Poor hapless suitors whom her beauty cowed.
How oft (alas! that childhood knows no thrill)
Her kisses on my baby cheek she'd spill!
While her foil'd lovers whispered at the sight,
"What treasure wasted! O too happy mite!"

107. TO CHROMIS

COME, young Chromis, I love thee, and I am lovely,
Pale as Dian, and light as her heart is mine!
Who am tall and proud as the Goddess. The shepherds wonder
When I go by them at twilight with downcast eyne,
Whether indeed I am made in the fashion of mortals,
And gazing, they whisper together, "What beauty divine!"

108. CLYTIE

MY Manés to Clytie are crying, "Farewell, fair one!
Is it thou whose footsteps here thro' the grass have
run?
Speak, is it thou, O Clytie? or must I stay
To wait thee still? An thou comest not every day
To muse a little on hours when I did thy will,
To hold sweet parley, behold this shadow that still
Doth love thee, ah! then shall my lone heart wearily
heave
Within the Elysian calm and my dead bones grieve
Under the burdening ground. When the dawn winds
run
Over thy mouth and thy bosom, belovéd one,
Weep, it is I thy lover whose soul hath fled
Far from his hallow'd dwelling among the dead,
Who on thy mouth, O dear one, alone would live.
O! weep, and with fond arms open, thy kisses give!"

109. THE FLUTE

WHEN I remember I am nigh to weep:
How he would hold the flute unto my lip,
And, smiling, set me level with his heart,
Swearing I beat him at his own smooth art.
'Twas he who taught my faltering lip to draw
Sweet breath unbrokenly and without flaw
Of suavest melody; my hands unskilled
By his deft hands over the stops were drilled;
'Twas thus I learnt, though still with blundering heed,
To close the gaps upon the sounding reed.

110. THE NYMPH ASLEEP

I KNOW when noon drives shadowward their feet
With silent tread to find their cool retreat,
Where thro' the cresses and the pebbled ooze
The roaming Naiad a random path doth choose
I gaze my fill upon the pale nymph shown
With bare limbs lissom on the green bank prone,
Who droops on to her hand, by lulling streams
Her reed-encircled forehead while she dreams.

111. THE HEIFER

OLD herder's daughter, thou whose hands are skilled
To draw the teat till thirty bowls be filled,
Ware the red heifer with the sullen gaze
That goes companionless apart to graze.
Free, she will break away, untamed and fleet.
Not thro' thy fingers shalt thou draw her teat,
Unless thou hoist with skill a sleek limb bent
And hold it slung until her store be spent.

112. THE YOUNG CAPTIVE

"THE sickle spares the springing corn,
The sapling vine-stems drink unshorn
All summer through dawn's dewy boon·
And I, as young and fair, am fain
Though now my cup be hard to drain,
To hide from Death that calls too soon.

"Let Stoics meet him unaghast;
I weep. Before the northern blast
I bow my head and lift again.

Sad days are nought beside the sweet.
What pathway never foiled the feet?
What sea but hath its hurricane?

"Within my bosom Hope doth breed,
And prison-bars stay not the speed
Of his wide wings that will not fold;
Scaped from the fowler's snare he flies
My blithe sweet bird o'er the wide skies,
And sings with heart too full to hold.

"Is death for me? With hope unquelled
I breathe, awake or slumber-held,
Free from remorse for evil done.
And with each dawn in this dark place
All eyes speak welcome for the face
Makes glad the heart of every one.

"Of milestones on my destined road
Scarce have I counted one, or strode
Beyond the trees about my home.
Scarce have I yet or broken bread
At the rich board that life doth spread,
Or sipped the full cup still afoam.

"My life's at Spring. I would behold
The harvest yield, and, onward rolled,
Would like the sun bear high my crown.
Fair on my stem the garden's queen,
The dawn-light my young eyes have seen
And yearn to see the sun go down.

"Death thou mayst wait. Go! get thee hence.
Heal thou the wounds of shame's offence
In hearts whereon despair doth brood.

For me Pan lurks, and sweet Desire
Hath kisses and the Muses quire.
I will not die in Maidenhood."

Thus, sad and captive, as she spoke
My lyre was stirred and silence broke,
In pity with her moaning blent.
And, shaking off my load of care,
I caught the song in rhyme's soft snare,
From her sweet lips and innocent.

And thus these rhymes in prison twined
May tempt some soul of studious mind
To seek the lady who thus woo'd.
So fair the face and words that pled
That unto all were death most dread
Within her gracious neighbourhood.

MARIE-JOSEPH CHÉNIER

(1764–1811)

113. HYMN

SOURCE of all truth, blasphemed by every liar,
Eternal guardian of all souls alive,
Freedom's own God, of Nature the one sire
In whom all live and thrive;

Thou hast set the world's base under seas unsounded,
Thine arm hurls wide or thunder-bolt or wind;
Thou shinest in the sun whose rays unbounded
Give strength to humankind!

Thy shrines are found in the unfurrowed prairies,
In cities opulent, in desert caves,
In lowly valleys and in mountain aeries,
In sky and under waves.

But for thy glory there is consecrated
A shrine more noble than the azure air
In upright hearts where burneth unabated
The incense of pure pray'r!

ANTOINE-VINCENT ARNAULT

(1766–1834)

114. THE DEAD LEAF

WAIF in the wind, O where
So swiftly dost thou speed?
"I nothing know nor heed
Since thunder toppled sheer
The oak-tree whence I hung.
South wind or northern blast,
Soft-voiced or shrill of tongue,
Do drive me onward fast
Who feel nor grief nor fear:
By wood or valley low,
By field or mountain height,
I pass from mortal sight
Where rose and laurel go."

BOOK IV

TO

A. G. SHIELL

PIERRE-JEAN DE BÉRANGER

(1780–1857)

115. THE SWALLOWS

ON the Moorish coast, chain-tethered,
Thus a captive soldier spoke:
"I behold you, shining feathered
Hosts that fly from Winter's yoke.
You whom Hope, O! happy swallows
Leaving France on truant wing,
On your sunward journey follows,
What home-tidings do you bring?

"Three long years have passed since dumbly
I implored some token gleaned
From the valley where I humbly
Dreamt of bliss the future screened.
Where the limpid stream runs looping
Round the lilac-scented garth,
Have you glimpsed my cot, and swooping
Gathered tidings of my hearth?

"One of you perchance did quicken
Under thatch where I was born;
Of the mother sorely stricken
You have wept the love forlorn.
Prone in death she hears my coming,
Grieving for the laggard beat
Of my footsteps slowly homing:
Do you bear love-tiding sweet?

"Is my sister's wedding over?
Have you seen the merry throng
Toasting bride and toasting lover
To the sound of happy song?
And the brave lads once went leaping
Into battle, do they see
Home again—or are they sleeping?
Have you news of friends for me?

"Over their slain bodies striding
The despoiling stranger may
In my home as master biding
Seek my sister to betray.
There no more a mother praying,
Here the heavy chains that cling—
Swallows from my homeland straying,
Sorrow's burden do you bring?"

116. VILE SPRING!

I SAW her at her window set,
Myself at mine all winter through;
And well we loved who'd never met,
Our kisses crossed the avenue.
Between the lindens bare of green
The sight of her made all seem gay;
But now you've made the boughs a screen,
Vile Spring! Why can't you keep away?

Their leafy arches serve to ban
For me that lovely seraph bright
I first saw feed her feathered clan
One morning when the frost was white;

They summoned her with songs that so
  Became the cue for Cupid's play:
There's nothing lovelier than snow!
  Vile Spring! Why can't you keep away?

When she awakes you are the cause
  I cannot see her leave her bed
As fresh as when Aurora draws
  The rosy curtains overhead.
Now too at night I'm left in doubt
  What time my fair star hides her ray,
And when she blows her candle out:
  Vile Spring! Why can't you keep away?

'Tis Winter that I'm pining for:
  Ah! what I'd give to hear again
The sound of pelting snows that pour
  In music on the window-pane.
What good are all your flowers to me,
  Your zephyrs and your suns of May,
When her sweet smile I cannot see?
  Vile Spring! Why can't you keep away?

MARCÉLINE DESBORDES-VALMORE

(1786–1859)

117. THE ROSES OF SAADI

THIS morning I had roses for thee found,
But I did hold them in my girdle bound
So tightly that they tumbled to the ground.

The bonds were broken, and the swift wind bore
Thy gathered roses to the sea-brimmed shore
Over the water to return no more.

The waves seemed red and flaming where they went.
This eve my raiment is still redolent:
Breathe on my bosom, love, their odours blent.

ALPHONSE DE LAMARTINE

(1790–1869)

118. THE LAKE

THUS ever drawn toward far shores uncharted,
Into eternal darkness borne away,
May we not ever on Time's sea, unthwarted,
Cast anchor for a day?

O lake! Now hardly by a year grown older,
And nigh the well-known waves her eyes should greet,
Behold! I sit alone on this same boulder
Thou knewest for her seat.

Thus didst thou murmur in thy rocky haven,
Thus didst thou shatter on its stony breast;
Thus fell the wind-flung foam on sands engraven
Where her dear feet had prest.

One eve—rememberest thou?—in silence drifting,
'Twixt deep and sky no sound had echo save
Afar the rowers dipping oars and lifting
Over thy waters suave.

When all at once a voice that made earth wonder
From the charmed shore drove all the echoes wide,
And rapt the wave, not fain as I nor fonder,
And with sweet words did chide:

"Stay thou thy flight, O Time! and happy hours
Trail by with laggard feet!
Let all the savour of your delight be ours
Of all our days most sweet!

"Too many grieving souls to thee are praying;
Nay, leave not these immune;
Bear off with thee their sorrows undelaying;
Leave happy souls their boon.

"Nay, but in vain I ask one gracious hour;
Time flies and will not hark.
I bid the night abide and dawn doth shower
His splendour down the dark.

"Ah! let us love, my Love, for Time is heartless,
Be happy while you may!
Man hath no Heaven and Time's coast is chartless.
He speeds; we pass away!"

Churl Time, and can it be sweet moments cherished,
Wherein love fills our lives with teeming bliss,
Speed far away and be as swiftly perished
As days when sorrow is?

Nay! Ere we go may we not leave sure traces?
Nay! Passed for ever? Beyond all reprieve?
What Time bestows on us, what Time effaces
He nevermore shall give?

O! everlasting night, deep pit unsounded,
What dost thou with engulphéd days untold?
Speak! Wilt thou yield us back the bliss unbounded
Once ravished from our hold?

O! lake, mute rocks, caves, leafy woodland shading,
You whom Time spares or clothes with newer sheen,
Keep of this night, fair Nature, keep unfading
The memory ever green!

In all thy calms and all thy tempests blending,
Fair lake, and in thy forelands' smiling fronts,
In thy dark pines and thy wild cliffs impending
Over thy crystal fonts,

In the winds passing, with a trembling lightness,
Heard in the echoes that thy shores throw far,
Seen in the beams that fall with sheeny whiteness
Wave-borne from the clear star!

Let moaning breezes thro' the rushes gliding,
All perfume stirring thy sweet air above,
All seen or heard or breathéd bear this tiding,
"Hereby they once did love!"

119. THE BUTTERFLY

COMING with the daffodils and dying with the roses,
Wafted by the zephyr's wing athwart the spaces high,
Lurking in the flower's bloom or e'er its breast uncloses,
Reeling with sweet draughts of scent, and light, and deep blue sky;

Shaking wide its dusty wings and like the breezes
breasting
Burdenless and innocent the sky's eternal steep:—
Thus doth fare the butterfly like hope that never
resting,
Rifles all but cannot quench desire that ever questing,
Bears it home to heaven again for lasting joy and
deep.

120. MEMORY AND HOPE

I REBEHOLD you, O belovéd Dead
About these doors and windows gatheréd;
With hands held out your own I seem to seize,
As water to the eye shows mirrored faces
That lean to meet our own in fond embraces
Till on love-kindled lips our kisses freeze.

O! Thou who madest memory, must it be
For nought at all? . . . Nay, we must render Thee,
When life is over in one stream to pour
What hath gone past and what is beyond knowing,
The two halves of our life together flowing,
This saying "Never," and that "For evermore."

Shall not this bygone Eden that we knew
In our Eternal Life have shape and hue?
For where Time is not shall not all Time be?
In that calm breast whereto our souls are cleaving
Shall we not find our loved ones beyond grieving
About the hearth-stone of Eternity?

121. THE WEST

THE sea grew silent like a seething bowl
That falls as the flame dwindles; backward led
Her waves still fuming in their wrath did roll
As seeking sleep in her unfathomed bed;

And the spent sun-star in his cloudy race
Stayed on the waves a rayless orb that sank,
Then plunged one half of his ensanguined face,
A flaming ship that the horizon drank;

Half heaven grew wan, and swooned away the wind
On the limp canvas, still and mute; the host
Of shadows fell, and under their gray blind
Both sky and water were together lost;

And in my soul that waned as the day slept
The sounds of earthly commerce no more stirred;
And something in me as in Nature wept
In grief and hope and gratitude unheard.

And on the west a sudden door flung wide
Poured floods of light that surged upon the gaze;
The empurpled sky was like a tent to hide
A hearthstone burning with unmeasured rays;

Clouds, winds, and waters to the blazing arc
Seemed all to haste as though a final doom
Should fall on all things with the falling dark,
And Nature perish in a world of gloom.

Thereto the dust of evening was fanned,
Thereto the white spray of the waters set;
And long and sad, unconsciously I scanned
The light they followed, with wide eyelids wet.

Till all was hidden; like an empty cup
My soul was even as the horizon hid;
But lo! in me a sudden thought rose up
As on the desert a lone pyramid:

O light! where goest thou? O flameless sphere!
O clouds, winds, waters, whither do you race?
Dust, foam, and night; you eyes; thou soul, speak clear!
Where is the goal to which you speed apace?

To Thee, Great All, of whom the sun's a ray,
In whom Night, Day, and the deep Spirit sink,
To whose divine impulsion all things sway,
Vast sea of Being that all life doth drink!

ÉMILE DESCHAMPS

(1791–1871)

122. DO NOT BELIEVE

LADY, they will tell you, "You are foolish to believe him!
Why then will you suffer more than he for all his grief?
A poet, all his sorrow fades away as words relieve him;
His sighs are spent in cadences, he sings for his relief.

"You leave him and he languishes, he dies . . . until to-morrow,
And then with his belovéd art rebuilds the world aright.

He finds in your dear absence an excuse for mimic sorrow,
And drives away dark sorrow's self by singing of his plight."

Yes, that is what they'll tell you, happy in their disesteeming
The arts they do not understand, the friendship they deny.
But you,—will you believe them in their pitiless blaspheming
That will not grant a groat of worth to writers such as I ?

Ah, no ! it is not sorrow that gives music to the poet;
But for the scent of roses and the charm of smiles he sings;
For when my heart cries out, alas! I have no speech to show it,
But weep above my idle lute and loosen all the strings.

123. THE UNKNOWN

I SAW in dream a fair unknown
More gentle than a sleeping child,
With sudden laughter lightly blown,
A fay with golden locks and wild.
'Mid daughters of the earth she flew
With Ariel for her kindred sprite,
And bore us news of heaven's delight . . .

I saw you, and my dream was true!

I heard in dream a seraph fair
  Sweet-singing on our human way;
And I, of some strange charm aware,
  Stretched out my hands from far away;
And like the tides that swell the sea
  I felt my full heart overbrim . . .
  And all my life in tears grow dim . . .

It is a dream no more to me!

I dreamed; to me so dark the day
  The hours of sleep are boon and dear,
And my deep sorrow to allay
  One night the holy child drew near,
Ah! then to what must I give heed?
  I heard her trembling voice above,
  "Nay dear, thou must not die for love."

Alas! it was a dream indeed!

ALFRED DE VIGNY

(1797–1863)

124. THE SNOW

WHEN barren boughs above us wave,
  And snow lies deep above the mire;
When all the earth is stone to grave,
  And lonely poplars upward spire;

When, snow on wing, the rook doth rock,
  Hard-frozen on his lofty perch,
As stilly as the weather-cock
  Upon the steeple of the church;

Ah! then how sweet to hear the brave
Old stories of the days of yore.
When barren boughs above us wave,
And snow lies deep, and earth lies frore.

125. THE SHEPHERD'S HUT

If thy heart, groaning under life's rude burden,
Writhe in its faring like an eagle hurt
Trailing a weary way with proud wing shattered,
Under a doom of grievous pain inert;
If it but beat when its red tide is streaming,
If there be hidden from all sight or seeming
Love's light that once for it the horizon girt;

If thy soul, shackled as my own sad soul is,
By fetters and long bitter fare fordone,
On the bare galley let the oar lie nerveless,
Lean wanly o'er the wave and weep alone;
If o'er the tide to unknown havens steering,
At thy bare shoulder's sight thou shudder, fearing
The brand of felony clear-scarred thereon;

And if thy body stirred by secret passion,
Shy and aloof be dreadful of man's gaze;
If with thy beauty thou wouldst dwell serenely
Withdrawn unsullied from the world's foul ways;
If thy speech wither in the wind of slander,
If thy brow redden lest thy fair thought wander
In some lewd mind that, seeing and hearing, slays;

Then get thee hence, leave all the towns behind thee,
Nor halt on ways that soil the feet that fare;
From thought's high pinnacle behold our cities
Man's bane, foredoomed to endless serfage there;

With fields and forests for thy sacred homing
Free as the sea round darkened islands foaming,
Cross the sweet fields, flow'r-laden, without care.

Nature awaits thee in her solemn silence,
And round thy feet the lawny mists exhale,
As far away the sun's last sigh sets swaying
The lovely lilies like swung censers frail;
The forest aisles grow dim; on waters dimmer
The willow sets unsullied leaves a-shimmer
And the far mountain hides in evening's veil.

The friendly dusk now slumbers in the valley,
On the green herbage and the golden lawn,
Below shy rushes where hid founts are welling,
Below the dreamy woodland far withdrawn;
It flies, and furtive thro' the wild vine shivers;
It throws a grey shroud o'er the steamy rivers,
And leaves the flowers of night half fain of dawn.

On mine own hill the heath is rank, and hunters
The ling and bracken scarce can trample through;
High on their brows the lofty wands that waver
Shelter the shepherd and the stranger too.
Hide there thy love and thy divine misdoing;
If grass be scanty, or the bent blades blowing,
Forth will I bring my Shepherd's Hut to view.

Smoothly it runs upon its four wheels stirring,
With roof flush with thy brow and eyes, my guest;
Thy cheeks' own colour as of palest coral
Tinting the night-car on its noiseless quest.
Its sill is scented and its alcove roomy
Where we shall find a silent couch and gloomy,
Flow'r-heapt for our two heads grown fain of rest.

I shall see, if thou wilt, the snowy moorlands,
Or lands whereon love's star her light doth pour,
Or those wind-ravaged, or where snows beleaguer,
Or where the dark Pole hardens to the core.
We will together as fair chance may beckon.
Of time or of the world why should I reckon ?
All shall be lovely that thine eyes adore.

* * * * *

She said, " I am the empty stage grown passive,
From tremors of the mummer's tread immune;
My emerald stairs, my courts of alabaster,
My marble columns by the Gods were hewn;
I hear nor shout nor sigh; nor, calm or stormy,
Feel the slow human comedy pass o'er me,
That looks to heav'n in vain for bane or boon.

" Onward I roll, unseeing and unheeding,
By ant-heaps or the swarming hives of men;
For me alike their dwelling and their ashes;
The names of nations are beyond my ken
Who bare them. I am grave whom men call mother;
In Winter's icy shroud your lives I smother,
Nor heed your worship when Spring come agen.

" Before you I was lovely with sweet odour,
Far on the wind my streaming locks flung sheer;
On skiey pathways immemorial faring;
On the smooth axle of a God-like sphere
Spun onward. After you thro' void space wheeling,
Still shall I soar aloof from human feeling,
With brow and breast that cleave the all silent air."

Thus spake she with her proud voice full of sorrow,
And in my heart I hated her, and knew

Our blood was in her tides; her fields and forests
Were fed with our own marrow as with dew.
I said unto my eyes towards her yearning,
"Gaze otherwhere, and weep not for her spurning;
Give thy love only where thou canst not rue."

Who twice shall know thy tender grace and gesture,
Mild angel, and most mournful with thy sighs?
Who like to thee shall bring such blissful solace
As thou from the wan radiance of thine eyes?
So sweet to us the swaying of thy slant face is,
So sweet to us thy prone lithe body's graces,
And thy pure smile in love's or sorrow's guise.

Live on cold Nature, and for us rekindle
Forehead and feet with thy predestined might;
Live and disdain, since thou art as a Goddess,
Meek man who over thee hath kingly right.
More than thy kingdom and thy thriftless glory
I hold the grandeur of our human story;
Nor will I cry to thee, in love's despite.

126. THE SOUND OF THE HORN

I LOVE the sound of the horn in the deep, dim woodland,
Whether it wail with the doe that is nigh to death,
Or cry the hunter's farewell on the echoes waning,
From leaf to leaf borne on by the north wind's breath.

How often alone, in the shadow at midnight straying,
I have smiled to hear it, how often have wept still more!

For I seemed to hear the rumour of things foreboding
The death of the Paladin knights that lived of yore.

O azure Mountain! O land that my heart is fain of!
Franzona fells, and summits of Marboré,
Fountains that fall with the drifted snows for a burden,
Torrents and brooks of the Pyrenees' chill spray,

Mountains frozen or fertile, throning the seasons,
Who have ice for crown and the meadows about your feet,
'Tis there would I dwell, 'tis there would I wait to hearken
The far-borne sound of the horn blow sad and sweet.

A traveller strayed mayhap when the air is stilly,
Lifts up this brazen voice that the night repeats;
With the sound of his cadenced songs for a while is blending
The tiny bell of the tethered lamb that bleats.

A doe that heareth the sound flies not but rather
Stands still as a stone on the hill-top, while waters chime
In vast uproar with the music for ever calling
From the old romance of the immemorial time.

Souls of the Paladins, say, do your ghosts still haunt us?
Is it you who speak to us still in the blare of the horn?
Roncevaux! Ronceaux! deep in thy sombre valley
The shade of the noble Roland is still forlorn!

VICTOR HUGO

(1802–1885)

127. THE SONG OF THE PROW-GILDERS

WE are the gilders of the prows.
The whirl-winds the smooth sea arouse,
  Spun onward like a turning wheel;
They fill the hollows of the deep
With shining spume and therein sweep
  The galleys on a slanting keel.

The squall whips round, the sly winds veer;
Loud the dark Archer, sounding clear,
  Holds the dread trumpet to his lips.
Mid this bewilderment 'tis we,
Though the wroth waves lurch giddily,
  Send forth, gold-helmed, the spectre ships.

For spectre-like their golden helms
Thrust thro' the flood and wind that whelms;
  Proud from our slips they take the sea,
A dauntless mark for lightning's lance
And a stern, terror-striking glance
  To perils lurking stealthily.

Under the cooling leafage go;
Keep shut thy full seraglio;
  Let not the veils down fall, O Sire,
From that strange throng that yestermorn
Stark nakéd to the mart were borne
  For barter to the highest buyer.

What matters that to wind or wave,
A fair slave or a dusky slave,
From Alep or from Ispahan ?
From thee alike all shrink away.
How wouldst thou then that that should sway
The wild and wondrous océan ?

Each sates and spends his royal whim;
The sceptre's thine; the storm's to him
And lightning; each hath blades to smite;
Thou hast thy scimitar, and he
His wrath; as of the wind the sea,
Men murmur at the Sultan's might.

We toil for ocean and for king.
Loud at our twofold task we sing!
O swarthy Lord of high renown,
Thy stony heart, thy steely eye
Shall not to drowsy birds deny
Their slumber-time when dusk comes down.

For Nature holds eternal sway
Nor falters; God's spread wing's alway
A shield whereunder all may hide;
We sing within the stilly shade
Blithe songs that rise all unafraid
Of black reefs hid beneath the tide.

Let these our masters bear the palm,
Be crowned with laurel; we are calm
So that they leave for us aloof
The myriad stars, so clouds still fly
On their swift courses steadily
Unheeding any man's behoof.

June shines, and flow'r on flow'r unfurls;
The rose buds on white-breasted girls;
  There's sport and mirth; the craftsmen sing.
Ah! then is penance hard to dree,
And the shy fawns light-footed flee
  And set the leashed hounds quivering.

O Sultan, though thy life be spent
Lapped round with soothest ravishment,
  Yet shalt thou die, and be no more.
Then live and reign—for life is sweet.
The fallow deer with folded feet
  Lie dreaming on the forest floor.

The mounted stairway leads thee back
To lowly earth; bright fires turn black;
  The grave cries "Lo!" to humankind.
Time's changing moons unplume the bird;
The slow resurgent tides are stirred
  And dying voices freight the wind.

The air is warm; bare women dive
Into the pool; buds sunward strive
  In heedless throngs; all's mirth and love.
White lustre shimmers on the mere;
The woodland roses upward peer,
  Self-mirrored in the stars above.

Thy galley we have gilded bright.
Four hundred shackled rowers smite
  Out from the port the insurgent waves.
She curbs the wind, she climbs the tide;
On either hand the rowlocks slide
  Beneath thy groaning galley-slaves.

128. SONG

TOWARD your scented garden, Sweet,
Would flutter all my linkéd words,
If with soft wings my rhymes might beat
The air like birds.

Like sparks along an airy path
Your happy home they'd haste to find,
Had they but wings for flight as hath
The wingéd mind.

By night, by day, still true to you,
They'd fly with eager winnowings,
If but my limping verses flew
With Love's own wings.

129. "SINCE FROM THY BRIMMING CHALICE . . ."

SINCE from thy brimming chalice I have sipped;
Since thy soft hands have held my blanchéd brow;
Since I have breathed the redolence that slipped
From thy sweet soul in earthy shadow now;

Since it was mine to hear from thee such speech
As made the shy heart blossom in its shrine,
Thy grief and mirth up-well, thy mouth beseech
My mouth, thine eyes a mirror unto mine;

Since I have seen upon my brow abide
One spark from thy brief star's now veiléd rays;
Since I have borne upon my life's full tide
One roseleaf from the stem of thy sweet days;

Now can I flout the swift years in their flight:
Go by! Go by! for me Time cannot scathe!
Speed on your way with your dead garlands dight;
Within my soul's a flower for ever rathe!

Your wing may smite but never a drop be spilt
From that full vase that, slaking, grows not less.
My soul shall flame unsmothered of your silt!
My love outlive your blind forgetfulness!

130. GUITAR SONG

GASTIBELZA, gun on shoulder,
Started this strange song:—
None of you knew Donna Sabine,
None among the throng ?
Sing and dance, good village people
For the sun falls steadily . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

None of you knew Donna Sabine
My own lady fair,
Mothered by the old Maugrabine
Out of Antequer ?
She who like an owl at nightfall
From her tower cried mournfully . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Dance and sing. Make hay, good people,
While the sun doth shine.
She was young, her joyous glances
Made the heart to pine.

Spare this old man with the urchin
Just a mite for charity . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Truly but the Queen beside her
Had seemed poorly graced
When she crossed Toledo's river
In her bodice laced.
Round her neck a linkéd chaplet
Old beyond all memory . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Said the King himself beholding
How my love was fair,
" For her kiss, or smile, or only
One strand of her hair,
Royal nephew, I would barter
Spain and all I hold in fee . . ."
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Did I truly love this lady ?
This I know alone:
Had she but looked kindly on me
I, poor dog, had gone
Happily ten years to prison
Captive under lock and key . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

On a summer day all sunny
Life and honey'd air,
She went streamward with her sister
Both to wanton there.

And I saw her slender playmate's
Foot agleam, and *her* bare knee . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

When I saw this child, I, shepherd
Watching o'er my fold
Thought it was Queen Cleopatra
Whom I did behold;
She who led the world's Lord, Cæsar,
Tethered, so says History . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Dance and sing, good village people,
Ere the night be old.
Sabine all her love and beauty
To Count Sarden sold;
All for a gold ring she bartered,
All for pride and jewelry . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain.
That will madden me.

I am weary; on this bench here
Suffer me to stay.
Now hath Sabine with her Master
Gone the truant way!
On the road that leads to Sarden,
If, indeed, that road it be . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That will madden me.

Past my hut I saw her hasting
Swiftly; that was all.
Now, from hour to hour I sicken,
Full of tears and gall.

Idler, gird thy belt with daggers,
To the barren wild win free . . .
There's a wind blows o'er the mountain
That hath maddened me!

131. THE VISION

ALOFT a white-robed angel I beheld;
His splendour the loud tempest's anger quelled
And won to silence the far murmuring sea.
"Why comest thou, angel, this dark night to me?"
I asked him. He replied, "Thy soul to take."
I trembled for in woman's guise he spake,
And with my hands stretched orth to him, I said
"What shall be left me when thou shalt be fled?"
He answered not, but all the heaven grew dim,
O'erwhelmed with shadow. Thereon I cried to him
"Where wilt thou bear me? Show me in what place."
Still was he silent. "O farer thro' blue space,
Art Death or Life?" I cried. Thereon did roll
All night's deep shadow o'er my ravished soul;
The angel form grown dim said "Lo! I am Love."
But his dark brow was fair as day's. Above,
Thro' his wide wings, beyond his shadowy gaze,
I saw the starry multitudes ablaze.

132. CHILDHOOD

THE infant sang; the mother, life near over,
Upon her darkened bed lay moaning, white;
While Death above in the dim air did hover.
I heard Death's rattle and the singing mite.

His playful babble sounding by the skylight,
Told all the bliss from five brief summers drawn;
His mother when he fell asleep with twilight,
Beside his tender breathing coughed till dawn.

They bore her to the grave for her last slumber;
But the child's happy singing did not fail:
Grief is a fruit; God wills not it should cumber
The slender branches for its load too frail.

133. JUNE NIGHTS

WHEN the long day dies in summer and flowers are closing,
They scatter their odours that thrill thro' the drowsy sense,
And our eyelids fall, while the sense, alert, lies dozing
And behind our slumber we gaze thro' a cloudless lens.

Then the stars are brighter, the dark has more soft concealment,
And over the dome of heav'n is a hue of day,
And the shy, dim dawn, awaiting the sun's fulfilment,
Lurks all night long low down on the skyline gray.

134. THE SLEEPER'S PRAYER

AS Laura to the Florentine
Draw near, Belovéd, to my bed;
And, passing, waft thy breath divine . . .
My mouth for sign
Shall be half-openéd!

Over my sad brow when the night
  Moves slowly with her darkened dreams,
Gaze downward as with starry light . . .
My inward sight
  Shall then be dazed with beams!

Over my kindled mouth where lies
  The God-lit flame of love divine,
Stoop with thy seraph's kiss, and rise
A woman . . . Wise,
  My soul shall wake to thine!

135. THE GRAVE AND THE ROSE

NOW Grave to Rose complaineth,
"With tears the dawn down raineth
  What dost thou, Love's own bloom?"
And Rose to Grave replieth,
"What dost thou when down lieth
  Love's self in thy dark womb?"

Saith Rose, "These tears down spilling,
With honeyed breath distilling
  To odours I do bring."
Saith Grave, "O blossom grieving,
Each soul of Earth's bereaving
  I fledge with angel's wing."

136. "I WILL SET OUT TO-MORROW . . ."

I WILL set out to-morrow when the dawn-light whitens
  all the land.
O my belovéd, well I know thou waitest still for
  me;

And I will over forest ways or where doth rise and
fall the land.
I cannot bear to breathe in air so far away from
thee.

And I will walk with fixéd gaze on thoughts that
cannot stray for thee,
And all without me shall be dumb, and all devoid
of light,
Alone, unknown, with downcast eyes and claspéd
hands that pray for thee,
So sad of mind, I shall be blind nor know the day
from night.

I shall not heed the sunset gold that down the west
is raining light,
Nor ships with swollen sail that to the haven onward
steer,
And when I shall be come to thee, by waxing or by
waning light
Then will I lay this holly-spray and heather on
thy bier.

137. "O FRANCE, WHEN THOU ART PRONE AND BOUND"

O FRANCE, when thou art prone and bound
Beneath the tyrant's ruthless heel,
A voice from the deep caves shall sound
And rive thy chains of steel.

The exile watching wave and sky
Shall raise a voice that men shall hear
Like words that in a dream drift by
Above their darkened sphere.

His words of menace shall be seen—
  His words that are as lightning's light—
Like swords that fill the dark with sheen,
  In hidden hands that smite.

Marble shall rock and mountains shake
  Athwart the sunset; trees that bear
Green boughs shall rend their locks and rake
  The shadow-compassed air.

His words shall be a horn that cries
  Shrill havoc on the ravening crows,
Or as a shuddering wind that flies
  By graves where the grass grows.

O'er newer races Time doth weld
  They like a thundercloud shall break;
And if the quick in sloth be held,
  The ashaméd dead shall wake.

138. THE CHILDREN OF THE POOR

GIVE heed unto this little lad
  For great is he, our God's own shrine,
A light, ere earthly vesture clad,
  That shone in heaven's own hyaline.

Bestowed by God for us on earth
  Out of his endless treasuring,
God's wisdom shineth in his mirth,
  His kiss bespeaks God's pardoning.

His soft light beams upon us all,
  Alas! Joy is his rightful path;

An-hungered, angel tears down fall;
A-cold, all heaven thrills with wrath.

If sinless ones have want for dower,
Man's shameful sin's arraigned thereby;
He holds the angels in his power.
What thunder hurtles terribly

When God doth find them here sore hurt
Within the darkness of our day,
Who sent them to us wing-begirt,
And finds them ragged in array!

139. THE SOWER

NOW falls the dusk I sit in peace
Beneath this gateway and behold
The ebbing daylight bring release
From toil by wood and wold.

With stirring at my heart I heed
Above the furrows night has steeped
A ragged sower throwing seed
Of harvests still unreaped.

His tall black silhouette above
The tillage deep strides on. How brave
Must be his faith that time will move
The grain within its grave.

He crosses the unending plain,
Now back, now forth; with open palm
He flings it wide and fills again,
While here I muse in calm;

And his vast shadow from below
Uplifted like a sail unfurled
With mighty rumour seems to sow
Athwart the starry world.

140. THE BRIDGE

I GAZED on darkness where the pit most dread
Yawned from its shoreless depth unfathoméd.
Therein nought stirred. I felt as one drawn down
Within its silent endlessness to drown.
Far off, beyond the shadow as though quelled
Like a dim star, the Godhead I beheld.
I cried: "My soul, my soul, thou must pass o'er
This endless gulf that hath nor shoal nor shore,
And this same night ev'n unto God must wend
Over a bridge of arches without end.
Nay, who can build it? None. Most dreadful pit!
O weep!" While still I gazed in awe on it,
A ghostly form and pale before me stept
That had the seeming of a tear new wept;
A virgin's brow, a child's soft hands were his;
And white he was as a pure lily is;
Light was where he clasped hands. He showed where loomed
The hollow pit whereto all dust is doomed,
So deep that thence no voice sounds back again,
And said, "Thy bridge I'll build, if thou be fain."
And on the pallid stranger I did stare.
"What is thy name?" said I. He answered "Pray'r."

141. WINTRY WEATHER

NOW Winter turns the roadway white.
In evil snares thy days are held.
The bitter wind thy hand doth bite,
In frosty hate thy joy is quelled.

The furrows fill with snow amain.
The light grows dimmer. . . . Now make fast
Against the sleet thy shutter'd pane,
Thy door against the northern blast.

But leave thy heart unshut to light,
A holy window. If the hue
Of light be lost still God may smite
With splendour of his glory through.

Mistrust the mortal fruit of bliss,
Mistrust man's hateful lust of strife,
Mistrust all priestly mysteries,
But still believe in love, O life!

In love as pure as at the first
Still shining thro' life's prison bars,
Whose draught is wine to human thirst,
Whose light is as the sheen of stars!

142. THE SWALLOW'S NEST

INTO the church with pray'r go by,
But throw a glance as in you go
At this small nest that's hanging nigh
The portico

On temples resonant with pray'r
The swallow all untrained and true,
Doth build a little shrine more fair,
More full of blue.

The old porch moss doth softer grow
Round fledgelings that the summer brings,
And they grow quick in the warm glow
Of Christ's own wings.

The shrine where shadows long have lain
Is thrilled with babble of delight;
The nest is full of mirth. The fane
Is full of night.

The never-flinching saints that hear
The arching doorways shake above,
Are glad to feel themselves so near
To spring and love.

The virgins and the seers incline
From their gaunt eyries fain to brood
Over these hives of birds that shrine
Love's holy food.

A bird upon an angel falls;
The apostle smiles upon his shelf,
"Good day to you, brave saint!" he calls.
"Good day, winged elf!"

In shrines is beauty manifest,
And high they soar on heaven's blue;
But in the summer swallow's nest
God dwelleth too.

143. ON THE DUNES

NOW that my tasks are done, and fast
  Life dwindles like a torch's glow,
Now that I seek the grave, down-cast
  By weight of years and weight of woe;

Now that belovéd things gone by
  Fade from my sight as though drawn in
By some dark whirlpool of the sky
  On summits once I yearned to win.

Now that I say, "We yet shall soar,
  The lie that shall stand revealed with dawn!"—
I am sad, and wander on the shore
  Like one into his dream withdrawn.

Beyond the sandhills without pause
  I watch unending breakers play,
Cloud-flocks that fly the vulture claws
  Of wind that seeks a fleecy prey;

The roaring tide, the humming air
  I hear, and sound of swathe and scythe,
And in my musing mind compare
  The weary voices and the blithe;

And often prone along some dune
  I lie where scant the grass is sown,
Until I see the dazéd moon
  With her foreboding eyes look down.

Athwart the gulf of darkened space
  She mounts and sheds a light of dreams,

And each stares in the other's face—
The man that weeps, the moon that beams.

Where now are fled the days that waned?
Are all who erst have known me dead?
And are my dazzled eyeballs drained
Of all the light that youth once shed?

Is all gone by? Forlorn and frail,
My voice unanswered dies away.
O winds! O waves! And must I fail
Like gusty wind or driven spray?

Shall all I loved be lost to sight?
Within my soul there falls the gloom.
O Earth whose peaks are veiled in night,
Am I the ghost, and thou the tomb?

Are life, love, joy and hope all spent?
I wait, I ask, I still implore.
And all my urns are earthward bent
To find one drop still left to pour.

How nigh remorse is memory!
How everything with tears is rife!
O Death, how cruel cold thy key
Within the wards of human life!

Yet louder than the wind that drives
The endless billows, my thought stirs:
Summer is come, the thistle thrives
Blue-flowered on the sandy spurs.

144. THE COLOSSUS OF RHODES

MY name is Light. I am seventy cubits high.
Ever I watch the unbridled waters beat,
A steadfast beacon. Under my huge feet
Lies Rhodes. My never-sleeping eyes descry
The snow-capt hills whereon the eagles fly.
The vast wheels of the star-led seasons fleet;
Man lives and dies; the moon-drawn tides retreat;
Fresh bales for barter on the flat wharves lie;

Day shines; the tempest slumbers or shows ire;
Warder of the blue vast I stand alway
A fixéd sentinel for ever ware;
Nor dawn nor twilight can these eyeballs tire
That watch sails fill, and waves like hounds that bay,
In the deep trance of my Colossal stare.

JULIEN-AUGUSTE-PELAGE BRIZEUX

(1803–1858)

145. THE NEST

THIS eve I left the flocks to stray and crop the grass
with no one by
Because she so desired a nest, that little lass as old
as I.

I bore my treasure home: a nest the tiny finches
fashion deft,
As firm as ever mason wrought, as soft as ever
weaver weft.

The outer rim was like a wall built high, with creeping
mosses clad,
And all within was down and wool so fine and soft,
O happy lad!

How light the little eggs I hold! They'll make a
necklace you shall wear
Together threaded, little Anne, with strands from out
your golden hair.

If I could slip it o'er the cap you wear on Sundays,
people would
Believe you were a little saint just changed to child
from angelhood!

146. THE NIGHT OF THE DEAD

IF in this house ye lie a-bed
Rouse, for this night is to the Dead!
For them God bids us knock your door,
Lest they be unrememberéd.

For them, O easy sleepers, pray!
The quick go lightly on their way:
Now on a bed of burning coal
Perchance your buried fathers flay.

Gold comes and goes; and yet behold
How many sell their souls for gold.
Arise, and on your chill hearth pray
That God may keep your dead in fold!

Be upright folk; of sin beware;
Weigh well your goods at mart and fair,

Nor give short measure. The Lord Christ
Shall pay you well for all your care.

Fire-winged, the holy Seraphin
Down to the Earth shall swiftly spin,
Saint Michael with his golden scales
To weigh your sinful soul therein.

Ah, then you'll need another bed!
A pad of hay shall prop your head,
And you within the winding-sheet
In lidded coffin shall lie dead.

Our song is a heart-rending thing;
All men must weep when we do sing.
Pray for your unforgotten dead;
God sends the summons that we bring.

EVARISTE BOULAY-PATY

(1804–1864)

147. THE BOUT

TWO wrestlers in a ruthless grapple strive
For triumph; but thro' long, long years doth toil
One whose fair brow the dew-filled flowers assoil
Who seems in his young lustihood to thrive;
The other an old man whose hard thews would rive
The thing they clasp, but lean with long turmoil,
Dull-eyed, wan-faced, with shrunken hands that coil:
'Tis Death that holdeth man within his gyve.

Death tightens his fell hold until at last
Man underneath his pallid foe falls down
Who thereon cries, "Behold a life o'erthrown!"
Man for a moment knows his might doth dwindle.
But rising, with his soul Death's self doth blast,
And even in dying feels his glory kindle.

CHARLES-AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE

(1804–1869)

148

SLEEPLESS upon my bed, my spirit's force
Elate upon a soundless flood did float,
When sudden hooves athwart the sky grew hot
And flashed the leven like a white-maned horse;
Thunder behind was goad to his swift course,
And the earth quaked beneath his chariot;
All beasts straight fell on stillness fear-begot,
Mute in their lairs as with some wild remorse.

But my soul kindled at the lightning spark;
My breast rose as each flash upon the dark
Tore off some wrapping that had bound me fast.
More than in storm God's voice within my mind
Spake loud; and as a viol to the wind
My spirit rose reverberate on the blast.

AUGUSTE BARBIER

(1805–1882)

149. THE IDOL

O LIMP-HAIRED Corsican! thy France was fair
By Messidor's wide sunbeams lit!
Like a rebellious steed that will not bear
Or golden rein or iron bit;
A tameless filly whose rude flanks did smoke
With blood of royal kings outpoured,
She proudly trod the ancestral soil and broke
At last from tyranny abhorred.
Never had she yet felt the mastering hand
Harass and goad with whip and rein;
Her back by saddle never had been spanned,
Nor dragged a foreign chain;
Ungroomed her wild mane; like a gypsy wench
Proud-eyed, her haunches swayed
On upright limbs; she made the whole world blench
Unquiet when she neighed.

150. MICHAEL ANGELO

HOW sad a glance, how shrunk a face thou hast
Michael sublime, old shaper of rude stone!
Never a tear have those sad eyelids shown;
Thou hast gazed like Dante on all mirth aghast.
The Muse did suckle thee too well, and fast
Art hath espoused thee, thou art hers alone;
Thro' threescore years of toiling thou hast known
No solace save on her chill bosom vast.

Thy life knew but one blessing: even as God
To seal the rock with thine immortal might;
And fearful were the feet that nigh thee trod.
Like to a lion with wild mane grown white,
When thy worn life drew to its period
Renowned but weary thou didst leave the light.

FELIX ARVERS

(1806–1850)

151

MY soul doth grope, a darkened way I go,
And that deep wound Love dealt in sudden might
Must go unstanched, unhealed; nor may I show
My hurt to her who heedlessly did smite;
Nor dare I plead for succour in my plight,
Nor that her hand should any boon bestow,
But follow near her though she never know
My doom of loneliness and utter night.

But she whom God made of such gentleness,
Will go her way without or heed or care
For my love's murmur where her footsteps fare;
And each day's task with pious heart will bless.
Reading these lines she'll say, still unaware,
"Who was this woman, then?" and never guess.

GERARD DE NERVAL

(1808–1855)

152. THE GLORIFIED

WHAT doth our loves befall?
They lie far underground!
And happier they who all
Have fairer dwelling found!

They are nigh the seraph throng
In skies that have no shade,
And worship with sweet song
God's Mother, the pure Maid.

O spotless spouse unta'en!
O maiden-flower in leaf!
Girl-lover left in pain
Alone and scarred with grief!

Deep everlasting mirth
Shines out from your bright eyes . . .
Brands once put out on Earth,
Flame on in Paradise!

153. FANTASY

THERE is an air for which I'd give all else
That Mozart, Weber, or Rossini wrote,
An old air full of languid, mournful spells
That moves me only by its charm remote.

And every time I hear its music heave
My soul grows young again 'neath Louis Treize,

Two hundred years ago . . . I see at eve
A fair green slope whereon the sunbeams blaze;

And then a red-brick castle cornice-bound
In stone, with crimson gleaming from the lead,
Engirdled by great parks, and moat-enwound
With flowery waters by a river fed.

And then a lady at a window high,
Blond-haired, black-eyed, in olden garments clad . . .
Perchance I saw her in long time gone by
In that remembered other life I had.

154

FREE-THINKER! dost thou deem that only man
Is sentient in a world where all is so ?
Forces enslaved thy liberty bestow,
Though thy vain mind the universe outspan.
In beasts respect the soul thou mayst not scan,
And flowers' that only Nature's self doth know;
The throbs of love thro' veinéd metals flow;
All's sentient, and hath power to bless or ban.

Beware the blind wall's sightless eye alert;
Ev'n matter hath a speech translatable . . .
See that thou move it not to thy soul's hurt!
In lowliest lives a God doth often dwell;
An unborn eye still sheathéd, the stone's face
Hides a pure soul beneath that grows apace.

155. EL DESDICHADO

I AM the dark inheritor of woe,
The Prince of Aquitaine whose palace spire
Lies low in dust. My star is dead. The wire
Of my starr'd lute burns with an ebon glow.
Into the grave's night send Pausilippo,
Blue Latin seas; and let my soul respire
The flower that won my weary heart's desire,
The trellis where the rose and vine-leaf grow.

Am I Love or the Moon . . . ? Lusignan or Biron . . . ?
My brow's still rosy with the Queen's hot kiss;
I have swooned in sea-caves where the syren is . . .
Twice have I overborne Hell's surge: I won
The lyre of Orpheus to sad melodies
Of saints, with fairies in loud antiphon.

ALFRED DE MUSSET

(1810–1857)

156. BALLAD TO THE MOON

'TWAS a dusky night I spied,
Hitched above the steeple high,
The moon ride
Like the dot above an "i."

Moon what sombre ghost doth trail
Thee in leash through the unknown
Shadow pale,
Face a-slant or fully shown?

Art thou heaven's only eye
  Whence a sneaking cherub peers,
Us to spy
  As from thy wan mask he leers?

Art thou nothing but a bowl?
  Or a spider huge of girth
That doth roll
  Legless, armless, over earth?

Art thou, as I half do dread,
  That old clock that sounds the doom
Of the dead
  Damned to hell's eternal gloom?

On thy speeding brow what toll,
  This same night, of time is ta'en
From the whole
  Of their everlasting pain?

Art thou nibbled by a worm
  When thy disk grows black and dim,
And thy form
  Shrivels to a crescent slim?

Who despoiled thee yesternight?
  Wert thou as a huge axe-blade
Hidden bright
  In some giant of the glade?

For thou camest, chill and wan,
  And they slender horn did spill
On my pane
  Light athwart the window-sill.

Go, O Moon, that ebbest slow,
Fair-browed Phœbe's body fell
Far below,
Deep into the surgy swell.

Now no more than face hast thou,
Wrinkled and long overworn;
Even now
Fades away thy brow forlorn.

The white huntress give us back
In her stainless maidenhood,
On the track
Of the drowsed deer in the wood.

O! beneath the hazel screen
Underneath the budding plane,
Dian Queen
And her lusty hounds astrain!

Where the black kid halts in doubt
High upon his rocky hill,
Hearkening out
How the sound drifts nearer still.

Following till the quarry's ta'en,
Gully, sward, or field asway
Gold with grain,
Dian's hounds are sped away.

O eve when the winds arise,
Phœbe, God Apollo's kin,
Doth surprise
By dim streams, a foot dipt in!

Phœbe who at close of day
On the shepherd's lips doth sit
Them to sway
Like a light bird newly lit.

Moon, the mind will ever hold
Of thy loves the lovely tale,
As in gold
Letters that can never pale.

And in youth that cannot die
Blest for ever thou to him
That goes by,
Full of face or sickle-slim.

Thou hast love from shepherds old,
Thou that alabaster-browed,
Nigh the fold
Setst the sheep-dogs baying loud.

Thou hast love from seamen hale
Shut within high-builded ships
That do sail
Under skies without eclipse.

And the girl thro' woodland ways
Nimble-footed that doth fare,
In thy praise
Breathes her song upon the air.

Like a bear that drags its chains,
Thy blue eyes behold below
The loud main's
Endless heaving to and fro.

Why, be winds or loud or dumb;
  Why, be skies or foul or fair,
Hither come
  I this way to sit and stare ?

'Tis to see in dusk of night
  Hitched above the steeple high,
The moon bright,
  Like the dot above an "i."

157. "PALE STAR OF EVENING . . ."

PALE star of evening, far herald wan,
  From thy blue palace thro' the sunset haze,
Thy brow emerges on the boundless span
  Of heav'n. Where goes thy plainward gaze ?
The storm has done and all the winds are stayed;
  The forest leaves drip downward on the heath;
The golden moth skims lightly, odour-swayed,
  The meadows redolent beneath.
What seekest thou on earth ? I see thee fare
  In shy flight downward on the sky-line rent
By hill-tops, smiling melancholy where
  Thy wavering glance grows weary and nigh spent.

O star descending on the verdurous slope,
  Sad tear of silver on Night's robe of grey,
Thou who afar dost watch the herdsman grope
  With sheep that follow on the darkened way—
Whither away, O star, thro' night's vast zone ?
  Seekst thou a reed-bed on the stream to sleep ?
Or wouldst thou fall in silence, lovely one,
  Like a thrown pearl into the waters deep ?

If thou must die, fair star, and if thy head
Must plunge in ocean's vasty deep, O spare
One moment ere thy lovely light be sped.
O star of love, leave not the heavens bare!

158. SONG

BRAVE knight that to the war doth go
What wilt thou do
So far away?
Dost thou behold the starless gloom,
How full of doom
The world's highway?

You that do deem a love that's left
Will fade as swift
From wounded thought,
Ah! you that after glory lust
Your fame to dust
Is sooner brought.

Brave Knight that rideth to the fray,
So far away
What wilt thou dare?
I weep who smiled whenas I heard
His lying word
That spake me fair.

159. ON A DEAD GIRL

LOVELY she was, if so be Night
That slumbers in the sombre shrine,
There laid by sculptor Michael's might
Unmoving in her marble line.

And she was kind, if it suffice
To succour with unheeding face,
And give unseen of God's wide eyes;
If heartless gold have any grace.

She pondered, if the idle stir
And gentle lilt of phrases low,
As plaintive as a brook, aver
That the shy brook doth ponder so.

She prayed, if two so lovely eyes
From downward gaze and upward glance
In flight from earth toward the skies,
May earn the name of pray'r perchance.

She might have smiled, if flowers shy
That yet within the bud are sealed,
Might open when the wind goes by
And leaves their longing all unhealed.

She might have wept, if her white hand
That coldly o'er her heart is set
Had ever human body spanned
With dews of heavenly odour wet.

She might have loved, had pride allowed
That ever kept its vigil vain,
And like a lamp set by a shroud,
Shone in her barren heart's domain.

The hue of seeming life she wore;
And she has died by life unstirred.
The book is fallen to the floor
Whereof she never spelt a word.

160. THE MUSE'S WOOING

POET, take thy lute and kiss my mouth!
The wild rose feels her tender buds grow ripe;
Spring is born to-night, and winds fly south;
Waiting for the dawn the throstles swing
On the first green bushes burgeoning.
Poet, kiss my mouth and tune thy pipe!

Poet, take thy lute! Night on the lawn
Wafts the wind in odorous veils she slips;
The virgin rose shuts jealously indrawn
The pearly hornet dying in a swoon.
Poet, take thy lute, and grant this boon—
On my eager mouth to lay thy lips!

Poet, take thy lute! Youth's kindling wine
Sweeps God's veins to-night in seething flood.
I am troubled; joy oppresses; winds divine
Set fire upon my lips from out the South.
Poet, take thy lute and kiss my mouth;
Quench my thirsty longing with thy wood!

161. CONSOLATION

WHY, O Dante, deemedst thou life's worst trial
Glad reminders in days grown dark with grief?
What deep wound could prompt thee to such denial
Bitter of pain's relief?

Light still shineth; and wherefore in darkness lying
Flout the solace of beams that did erstwhile shine?
Soul of unmeasured sorrow for ever sighing,
Say can this speech be thine?

By this torch that lights me with flame resplendent,
Thine own heart this blasphemous speech belied.
Bliss remembered is dearer and more transcendent
Than ought on earth beside.

Nay! the forlorn that findeth a spark still glowing
Under ashes that smother his miseries,
He who seizes the ember and on it blowing
Gazes with dazzled eyes;

He whose soul goes groping for bygone kisses,
Who on the Past's flawed mirror his tears doth rain—
Him thou deemedst a dupe, and his heart's fond blisses
Intolerable pain!

On Francesca's lips, thine own angel of glory,
Couldst thou utter so bitter a speech as this?
She who left for a moment, to tell her story,
Her everlasting kiss.

162. SORROW

STRENGTH and Life have fled afar,
Friends are not, and Mirth is dead;
Gone is pride that erstwhile fed
Faith in my frail star.

Once I hailed a friend in Truth
Ere I knew her changing guise;
When the scales fell from mine eyes,
Ah, the bitter ruth!

Everlasting is her pow'r,
And all men that pass her by

Unperceiving, fruitlessly
Live their little hour.

God doth speak and man that hears
Needs must answer; all of good
Life hath given me is the flood
Eased my heart of tears.

163. FORTUNIO'S SONG

IF you think that I'll discover
Her for whom my heart doth sue,
Not for kingdoms could this lover
Tell her name to you.

So it please you, pleasant fellow,
I will sing an you will pipe,
She I love hath hair like yellow
Corn when it is ripe.

Unto that her whim ordaineth
Straight my willing heart defers.
Doth she need my life, it waneth
Gladly into hers.

Grief of love that's unrevealéd,
That none other answereth,
In my wounded soul lies sealéd
Even unto death.

I'll not tell for whom I'm suing;
Nay, I love my sweet too well,
And I'll die for her I'm wooing
Ere her name I tell.

164. SONG

WHEN men do find upon a day
Hope fled away
  And joy grown ill,
There's nought can soothe their misery
As melody
  And beauty will.

Far more by lovely eyes are swayed
Than by the blade
  Of arméd foe;
And nought can bring the heart such ease
As melodies
  Loved long ago.

THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

(1811–1872)

165. TERZA RIMA

WHEN Michael Angelo left the Sistine dome,
His frescoes done, sublime with radiant gaze
To tread once more the wonted streets of Rome,

His arms and eyes to heaven he still did raise,
His feet went stumbling on the road of clay,
Who had forgotten earth in heaven's amaze.

While three long moons went round thus did he stay,
As though he were an angel rapt before
The golden triangle's mysterious sway.

Brother, behold why poets suffer sore,
With feet that falter on the world's hard road:
For ever on high heaven do they pore;

And angels, shaking their gold locks abroad,
Lean over them with sheltering arms held wide
And round mouths ready with a kiss from God.

They follow random ways with random stride,
Bruised by the wheels or fellow farers' ire,
Or fallen on pitfalls by them unespied.

What care they for the crowd, or stones, or mire?
They seek by day the visions night doth bring,
Their cheeks aflame with unappeased desire.

Of earthly cares they know no reckoning,
And when in season due their shrine is made,
Forth come they dazed from their dark covering.

The glory of their holy toil hath rayed
Their forms and foreheads with its golden light;
Their eyes do glow with heaven's own light displayed.

Night follows day, and day doth follow night,
Ere yearning eyes, beseeching arms fall down;
And long it is ere their feet fare aright.

Our palaces for them are all o'erthrown;
Their souls for ever to their shrines fly back,
And leave their bodies on our ways alone.

Our day to them seems than the night more black.
Their eyes seek ever the blue sky divine,
And the left fresco puts them on the rack.

Like Buonarotti, giant Lord of line,
Their gaze goes ever to the heavenly vault,
And marble roofs that nigh their foreheads shine.

O sublime blindness! O majestic fault!

166. BOAT SONG

TELL me, lovely girl,
Whither would you go ?
For the sails unfurl
And the breezes blow!

I've an ivory scull,
Streams of silken flags,
Golden-ruddered hull
Thro' the water drags;

And for ballast weight
An orange round and light;
And my little mate
Is a seraph mite;

And the sail that swings
Is together sewn
From the down of wings
Cherubim have known.

Tell me, lovely girl,
Whither would you go ?
For the sails unfurl
And the breezes blow!

Would you to the North
  Where the Baltic raves
Say, or would you forth
  Over tropic waves ?

Where the bergs are chill
  Pluck the flower of snow,
Or where fierce suns spill
  Cull the flower below ?

Tell me, lovely girl,
  Whither would you go ?
For the sails unfurl
  And the breezes blow!

* * *

" Drive for me your keel,—"
  So the girl did sigh—
" To the land o' leal
  Where no love may die."

" That's a coast, my dear,
  Not upon the chart
Of the bays and drear
  Forelands of the heart."

167. ART

ALL finest art is seen
  In forms that foil the blade
Unkeen—
  Verse, marble, gem inlaid.

All idle bonds refuse!
  Yet, so thou move aright,

Bind, Muse,
Thy limbs in buskins tight.

Spurn the too supple lilt
That like an easy boot
Is built
For any random foot.

Thou sculptor, cast aside
The clay thy hands alone
Have plied,
Thy spirit elsewhere flown.

Strive with the marble rough
Hewn from Carraran steeps,—
Such stuff
The perfect contour keeps.

From Syracuse her bronze
Take thou, thereon imprest
The sconce
Of proud or yielding gest.

With deftest hand go trace
Over the agate rare
The face
Apollo once did wear.

Painter, all tints refuse
That fade; but pass thro' fire
The hues
So fixt to thy desire.

Call up the syrens blue
With loopéd tails entwined

Ensue
With beasts of mythic kind.

Above the world enthrone
Christ and the Maid Divine;
Each one
Girt with the holy sign.

Though all things end in dust,
Yet Art well-wrought lives on;
The bust
Outlasts the city gone.

The buried coin or ring
Dug up by some poor hind,
May bring
An Emperor to mind;

And lines of perfect sound,
Though Gods themselves may pass,
Are found
More durable than brass.

Hew down and chisel fine,
So that thy dream be sealed
For sign
In stuff that will not yield!

168. THE CLOUD

A CLOUD the far horizon scales
And shapely on the sky-line sails,
As though a naked girl rose slowly
Out of a lake that no shadow veils

And upright in her shell of pearl
She sails the blue, this pallid girl,
Foam-frail, a later Aphrodite
Born of the foam in the air a-swirl.

Behold the supple shining limb,
And how she wavers in her whim,
And how Dawn scatters roses, roses
Over her satin shoulder slim.

169. SONG

THE butterflies that are the snow's own hue
Flutter in swarms above the ocean spray.
O butterflies, when shall I take with you
The blue aërial way?

And dost thou know, O fairest of the fair,
My black-eyed maiden with the spinning feet,
If they could lend me wings to cleave the air
Whereto I straight should fleet?

I should not kiss a single rose, but fly
Straight over vale and forest to my goal
Upon thy half-shut lips at last to die,
O blossom of my soul!

BOOK V

TO

THE SHADE OF ANDREW LANG

DEAR Andrew whom I never met,
Still o'er the years your version mellow
Shows "Aucassin and Nicolette"
In English verses without fellow.
Your Songs and Ballads of Old France
Are sweetly sung; and on your anvil
You struck out sparks that still enhance
The fame of Murger and De Banville.

Though here the jealous eye may find
Some few of those yourself did render,
Think not, my master, I am blind
To what in you is blithe and tender.
But he who in his book is bid
To show the Gallic Muse completely,
Must give again what others did
Although he give them far less sweetly.

And therefore, while your robes I don,
I set you here among my Lares
Without your leave, since you are gone
To haunt the land of myths and fairies.
And may your sprite upon the sill
Be pledge of all that's sweet and sunny,
Although I ply a wanton quill
And oft-times render gall for honey.

VICTOR DE LAPRADE

(1812–1883)

170. THE SUMMITS

I WILL go and drink the waters pure that feed the
rolling river;
I will tread the frozen azure of the glacier under
heel;
I will bathe my body in the waves of new-born winds
that shiver;
The surging flood of thrilling air shall temper me
like steel.

Let me slumber on the mountain-top that I have
toiled in winning,
And, thrust in the eternal snow, my hands be
purified;
There, in that air, life's currents have their impulse
and beginning,
Ah! let me hence and breathe full deep of that
unsullied tide.

Then up! the moaning wind wanes out beneath the
giant boulder,
Doubt cannot soar so high aloof as that chill height
I seek;
Then up! with calm and silence swathing brow, and
breast and shoulder,
Within that rocky steadfastness God's solemn voice
shall speak.

The air I breathe on that chill height shall fill me on descending,
Along the sombre ways a ray of light shall follow me;
And those that saw the toiling man toward the summit wending,
Shall never guess the wayfarer returned is even he.

LOUISE ACKERMANN

(1813–1890)

171. IMMORTAL LOVE

THE race of men in an eternal chain
Hand on the quenchless embers of Love's pyre;
Each takes the immortal torch and lights again
Its never-ending fire.

Dazed by the glory of its wandering rays,
You swear when the dark night has downward rolled
To hold it high above your path always,
Yet dying, lose your hold.

Yet will your eyes have seen its glory lit;
Your life, transfigured in its sublime beam,
May bear its dazzling vision to the pit
That lies beyond all dream.

JOSÉPHIN SOULARY

(1815–1891)

172. THE TWO ROSES

YESTREEN beneath the greenery
I found young Rose in tears that shed
Over a little rose's bed
That was less rosy far than she.
"Dear heart, what can your trouble be?"
I asked the little golden-head.
And she replied, "Ah, sir, if said
It's secret between you and me!"

"As I was passing by, a rose—
This same whereon my tears down pour—
Told me this truth in shy soft words,
A bud once blown can never close.
And my fond heart's wide open for
The farmer's boy that drives the herds."

173. VAIN DREAMS

HAD I but an acre of loam on hill or valley,
Fed by a stream that fell or loitered by,
There I'd plant an ash-tree, a thorn-bush or a willow,
There I'd build a low roof between me and the sky.
On my tree a soft nest, feather-lined or woolly,
There should hold a singing-bird—sparrow, finch or merle,
Underneath my own roof, a bairnie in the cradle
Garlanding the pillow with her brown or yellow curl.

All I want's an acre; and so to measure rightly,
I would take the lassie bonniest to me;
"Stand thou uprightly"—so should be my bidding—
"Front the rising sunbeam." So, surely should I see.
"Far as thy shade on the grassy levels printed,
Just so far my faring, no farther than the shade's"—
All the lure of bliss that's far beyond fulfilment
Holds no more for me than a fickle dream that fades.

174. THE SCARECROW

UNDER her tilted hat of Tuscan rushes
The brown birds at her coming swept to raid
The ripe fruit in her open palm displayed,
That she had gathered from the berry bushes.
Never more loyal court, more queenly blushes,
A queen more kind or starvelings less afraid.
Vainly the grudging gardener erst forbade
This foolish feeding of her wastrel thrushes.

The child is dead. The churlish gardener lays
Her old straw hat upon the loaded sprays,
Thinking these greedy plunderers thus to scare.
Vain ruse! Reminded of her gentle heed,
A thousand fledgelings to their sister speed,
And evening finds the bushes all stript bare.

LECONTE DE LISLE

(1818–1894)

175. THE RAVINE OF SAINT-GILLES

THE gorge is dark below the reeds' massed slimness
Wherethro' the sun at noonday may not pierce;
And hidden springs slow-thridding thro' the dimness
Are merged in silence of the solstice fierce.

From the hard lava with mossed fissures pouring
Over the lichens there is water shed
And lost; from hidden tunnels of its boring
It springs again along its gravel bed.

There smooth and sullen a dark bluish well is,
While all along are heavy boulders bound
With rosy-belled lianes as on a trellis
Above the velvet plots of grassy ground.

The brink is fledged with cacti, and far flowing,
The bent-grass waves its filmy flowers near,
Where stalks the red-plumed cardinal whose going
Fills the soft-nested colibris with fear.

Kingfishers and green parakeets unstirring
From the high peaks gaze down on the still well;
And round the black hives in a sunbeam whirring,
A golden swarm of bees is audible.

Puffing a warm breath o'er the bushes mazy,
Stockstill amid the weed-entrammelled path,
Huge oxen sniff the air that wanders hazy
Clean from the running rills as from a bath;

And on their peaceful flanks, their shoulders bossy,
A myriad butterflies with gaudy wings,
A myriad grasshoppers deride the glossy
Slow swishing of the velvet tail that swings.

On the rock slope flame-filled as a live cinder
The supple lizard, basking in his sloth,
Simmers as though his emerald length were tinder
That thrilled to the sun's kisses nothing loth.

O'er mossy hollows where the quails are resting
In leafy shelter from the jungle heat,
With eyes half-closed the amorous cats go questing,
Smooth gliding by on velvet paws discreet.

Black on a boulder, a red loin-cloth wearing,
A native herdsman careless of his kine,
Hums a Saklavan melody, and, staring,
Dreams of the isle beyond the blue sea-line.

Thus on the yawning brink all things that tingle
With life thro' frond or fibre, plume or pelt,
Now shine, and dream, and chant in purpose single;
Yet, in a twinkling, into stillness melt.

Thro' the deep pit now silence walks with darkness,
Since, with a roaring sound the mountain steep
Hurled from the waves its sulphurous mass, in stark-
To harden in impenetrable sleep. [ness

A patch of sky above the branches curving
Shows in a sparkle on the air up-buoyed
A flock to Ceylon or Rodrigué swerving
Like flakes of snow astray on the blue void.

Save for this peep-hole on the water flashing,
In the still night the ravine sinks to sleep;
And even a splintered boulder downward crashing
Sends up no echo of its dreadful leap.

He who hath probed thy ways, O Nature, proveth
Illusion binds thee, and thy face belies:
Whether in wrath or gladness thy strength moveth,
Or rage or rapture thy cold heart denies.

Happy the man whose heart is his own shelter,
Self-sealed, from grief or mirth or any hate,
Unstirred by rumours of the world's va n welter,
A gulf of silence still inviolate.

In vain life stirs about him; as one hallowed,
He dwells in his own heart as in a shrine;
In its unechoing darkness all is swallowed,
And nothing shines there, save one flame divine.

But this sole spark within its shadow hidden
Is the lost beam from spaces unbeheld;
It calls him hence to realms by life forbidden,
And lights in him the Eternal hope unquelled!

176. HIALMAR'S HEART

A CLEAR night, icy wind, and blood-streams staining
The snow where tombless lie a thousand dead,
With sword still gript and eyes aghast. Complaining
The ravens wheel above them still unfed.

The light pours wanly from the moon's chill'd embers.
Forth from the bloody heap Hialmar lifts

On his snapt sword himself whose corse dismembers,
The blood of battle raining from its rifts.

"Ho there! Lives there one lad in whom still speech
Of all the lusty throng that dawn heard sing [is
Full-throated as the thrush when he beseeches
Behind the thick-set bushes in the spring?

"All, all are dumb. My helm is slit, mine armour
Is riddled thro' and cloven in the fray,
Mine eyes weep blood. I hear a swollen clamour
Like foiled sea-breakers or loud wolves that bay.

"Come hither, old man-eater round me gliding,
Rive thro' my bosom with thy beak of steel—
The morn shall find us stark and still abiding—
Bear thou my warm heart to the girl that's leal.

"To far Upsala where the Jarls together,
With song and golden flagons hold carouse
Bear thou my heart, old rover of the heather,
To Ylmer's daughter who hath heard its vows.

"There shalt thou find her standing pale, uprightly
Aloft the tower where the daws wheel by,
And in her ears two silver rings hung lightly,
And her eyes brighter than a clear-starred sky.

"Tell her the love I bear her, dusky raven;
Lay down thy trophy whole and red of hue;
She'll know it well, the unblanching, the uncraven,
And Ylmer's daughter she shall smile on you.

"I die. From twenty wounds ebbs out my spirit.
Come wolves and drink my blood! My life is done.
Young, brave, unshaméd, I shall soon inherit
My seat where the high Gods are in the sun."

177. THE SPRING

A SPRING up-sparkles in the silent forest,
Far hid from blazing noon.
There rushes quiver, and fain of its cool boon,
Bluebells and violets hover.

Not goats that crop the bitter-bladed grasses
On hilly slopes hard by,
Nor shepherds with their flute's suave melody,
Have sullied that clear fountain.

The tall black oaks by all the bees belovéd,
Throw peaceful curtains wide
Wherein the wild doves lurk or, drowsy, hide
Their heads beneath their feathers.

The dawdling stags beside the mossy thickets
Draw in the unhastened dew;
Under green canopies the light drips through,
The lazy sylvans slumber.

And the wan Naiad of the sacred fountain
Lets fall her lids awhile,
Dreaming, half-drowséd; and a happy smile
Flits round her mouth's red flower.

No yearning eye, love-lit, hath seen that body
Beneath its limpid veil

All snowy white, with long locks liquid-frail,
Asleep on the sand's silver.

And none hath seen that cheek of maiden softness,
The ivory neck, the line
Of that young bosom or the shoulder fine,
White arms and lips unsullied.

But the lewd faun, alert on the near branches,
Spies through the leafy net
Her supple body with spilt kisses wet,
Beneath the water shining.

Thereon he laughs with strident joy inhuman
That thrills the arbour cool;
And the maid startled, pallid o'er her pool,
Wanes out like a blown shadow.

Ev'n as the Naiad in the distant woodland
Asleep beneath the tide,
Fly from the impious hand and eye, and hide
Light of the soul, O Beauty!

178. NIGHT

THE spent winds on the mountain slopes at peace
To sleep the swaying branches slowly woo;
The still birds drowse in dew; the foaming fleece
Is gold with star-beams on the waters blue.

Soft mist hides all the mountain tracks and swathes
The plunging gullies and the peaks that soar;
The sad moon in her light the foliage bathes
And sounds of human-kind are heard no more.

But on the pebbles sings the unsullied surge,
The deep voice of the forest doth intone;
The thrilled air bears sea-song and forest-dirge
Up to the night upon her star-lit throne.

Mount upward holy murmur, divine speech,
Be Earth's low tidings unto Heav'n upborne,
And ask the serene stars if we may reach
Their thrones by an eternal pathway worn.

Earth's holy orison of wood and wave
Thou hast consoled me in dark days of yore;
Me from my barren sorrow thou didst save
And in my heart thou singest evermore!

179. TRE FILA D'ORO

YONDER o'er the sea like a swallow hasting over,
Fain would I fly till I reached the shore beyond!
Vainly I long who am held a captive lover;
With three strands of golden thread she hath my heart in bond.

One is her glance, and one her smile compelling,
One is her lip like a flower nigh to fall;
Nay, but I love too well, and suffer beyond telling;
With three strands of golden thread she hath my heart in thrall.

Ah! If I might break the so stubborn knots that bind me,
Bid farewell to weeping and to pain, a truant flown!
But ah! No! No! Better death in anguish find me,
Than rend you asunder golden threads that she hath sewn!

180. THE BLACK PANTHER

ALONG the clouds there spreads a rosy lustre;
The horizon's laced with flame; while languidly
Night from her neck unlinks the pearly cluster
That falls into the sea.

The sky dons flaming vesture of dawn's weaving,
And folds of shifting splendour swathe the blue;
The trailing raiment reddens the sea's heaving
With drops of fiery dew.

On bamboo-bushes that the light wind threshes,
On palms and purple-fruited fronds asway,
Dew scatters silver sparks, and dawn refreshes
The myriad sounds of day.

From moss and flow'r, from hill and woodland spreading,
Lulled by the tepid wind there now upwells
A wave of air, scent-saturate, down shedding
Its fever of sweet smells.

By tangled paths beneath the wood's green awning,
Where the thick grasses in the sunlight smoke,
Where torrents roar down deep-hewn gullies yawning
Under the reeds they soak;

Behold the panther comes with black limbs shining
Back from her midnight hunting to her whelps
Where amid bones they huddle close, repining
With hunger-goaded yelps.

Restless, with wary eyes like arrows probing,
She steers among the boughs her furtive way,

And on the blackness of her velvet robing
Gleam blood-stains of her prey.

She drags its mangled remnant, torn asunder
From a slain stag, whereon to-night she'll feed,
And the frayed haunches of her dreadful plunder
Drip blood on moss and weed.

Round her the butterflies and wild bees muster,
Skimming her supple sinews as they fleet;
A myriad bushes where sweet blossoms cluster
Throw perfume at her feet.

The python from a scarlet cactus peering
Unwinds his coil, and with a curious eye
Beholds, above the bush his flat head rearing,
Her stealthy form go by.

She glides beneath tall fern-trees, sinking noiseless
Behind mossed boles; the blazing air the while
Struck dumb in the vast light above, grows voiceless
Beneath the forest aisle.

181. THE SHOWMEN

LIKE to a dismal brute, dust-smothered, teased,
That tugs its chain and bays the blistering sky,
Trail thy torn heart who will in the foul sty
That so the lewd, flesh-ravening mob be pleased;
Let Love's own veil of glorious light be seized
And torn from shuddering limbs divinely shy,
That so the fire rekindle its dull eye,
Its mirth and boorish pity be appeased!

Though proud and silent graveward I go hence,
I'd rather plunge to endless darkness down
Than sell my heart-throbs for the rabble's roar;
I would not give my body like a clown
To tumble on its paltry board for pence,
Nor leer for lovers like a shameless whore.

182. AFTER A THOUSAND YEARS

THAT night the loud voice of the sea was roaring
Wroth in the darkened gullies' rocky cup,
And, all dishevelled, clouds of mist were pouring
Where round the headlands the whipt spume rose up.
The howling wind smote all the shades asunder
And tore them on the cliff-tops; savagely
With bellowing fury as of taurine thunder
It drove the herded breakers of the sea.

Like an enormous monster, frenzy-driven,
With bristling hide and mouth afoam with wrath,
The mountain rearing in the embattled heaven
Moaned dreadfully, its loins white with froth.

Rapt by the desperate cries, I heard more loudly,
O Vision, O Desire, O Life new-born!
In the wild air your holy songs that proudly
Called to me like the trumpeters of morn.

And forth from the infernal cavern reeking
My soul escaped from darkness and dire drouth,
Into the feverish air of life, still seeking
For Glory's laurel and for Beauty's mouth.

And thus the dreadful night's loud voice spake to me:
"Lo! Life is sweet. Burst thou thy sepulchre!"
And the mad wind with its wild notes and gloomy:
"Let Beauty draw thy being into her!"

And I who seek this boon of hours appalling
After a buried century of decades,
Hear nothing but these savage tears down falling,
The muffled onset of embattled shades.

183. THE LION'S DEATH

A HUNTER old whom once the desert air
And bulls' blood pricked to hunger, then he scann'd
The sea beyond him and the lonely sand
With sullen roaring from his rocky lair.
Then like a damned soul in dire Hell's despair
For the lewd pleasure of a gaping band,
He came and went within a cage, his grand
Rude head wall-thwarted in his pacing there.

Such being his vile doom perpetual
All meat and drink the savage beast put by
Till his wild soul in death o'er-leapt the wall.
O rebel to the world's captivity,
Weak heart still caged, why wilt thou too not die
And like the lion make an end of all?

184. A FESTIVAL

NOR bloody altar, nor barbaric rite
With tresses in a wreath of flowers bound,
A fair-hued maid of Ionie moves round

Over the moss as the soft strings invite.
Nor bloody altar, nor barbaric rite:
  Blithe songs, blithe laughter where the flowers
    abound!

Nor Pan nor Satyr do the dancers heed.
  A young man girt with myrtle of sweet balm
  Leads on the quire whose voices waft the psalm
As Eros and the Cyprian goddess plead.
Nor Pan nor Satyr do the dancers heed:
  Smooth-gliding feet, a greensward steeped in balm!

Nor storm nor wind to fill the soul with fear.
  Thro' the blue sky the happy songs fly up,
  And lovely children bear the brimming cup
To elders whom the green boughs over-peer.
Nor storm nor wind to fill the soul with fear:
  A cloudless sky wherethro' the songs fly up!

185. CAMEO

LONG shall he live thro' time rememberéd
  By all the happy gods! Whose sure hand knew
Over the polished onyx-stone to spread
  These ripples on the blue.

Here, with the sun, soft with bewildered eyes
  Such as a young and joyous queen might have,
Behold the swooning Cyprian goddess rise
  Out of the syren wave.

Naked she is; her rosy breasts invade
  The surging waters; and her throat divine
Is looped about with silver-woven braid
  The cloven surges twine.

Her golden tresses on the sea a-swim
Are not in garland or in fillet bound;
Her body shines like some pale lily slim
Amid the violets found.

She laughs and gambols, and the dolphins gay
The godlike radiance of her gaze to win,
Stir up the surge upon her watery way
With thrust of tail and fin.

186. THE SUPREME CONSUMMATION

NAY, but the world is old, nigh old as hell;
Since first man wept, since first desire o'ercame
With fire more fierce and bitterer than hell's flame,
The tale of time is grown too long to tell.
'Tis life is ill and dying that is well,
Whether wrist-bound the sea our body claim,
Or with clear eyes on heaven we fall full game
To stroke of sword or to the bursting shell.

Thou hast my love, O heart whom Earth so craves,
O burning might that bears the martyr out
Whose soul in passing grows in strength serene!
O splendid blood, come shrive me in thy waves,
So may I, while the vulgar rabble shout,
Pass to my endless home with spirit clean!

187. NOON

NOON whose kingdom summer is, spread wide along
the plain's expanse,
Falls down to earth in swathes of silver from his
throne in heaven's blue.

All is silent. Air's aflame and burns as in a breathless trance;
Earth lies drowsed beyond awaking in her robe of fiery hue.

Far, in farness beyond span, stretch meadows where no shadow shows,
The stream where once the cattle watered now hath no more draught to bring.
Far away the forest slumbers deep amid the darkling boughs
Yonder on the still horizon where they stand unquivering.

All alone the tall wheat-ears wave to and fro their ripened grain,
As though a tide of golden waters, heedless of the drowsy call.
Sacred Earth's most careless brood with fearless lips that seek and drain
To the lees the brimming chalice that the sun holds out to all.

Now and then, as though a sigh from out their burning souls impels,
The bosom of the heavy wheat-ears lifts a murmurous sound, a-sway
With a slow majestic motion of the golden tide that swells
Till it touch the dim horizon where in haze it dies away.

Nearer, mid the grasses prone lie oxen white whose dew-laps are
Slow-dribbling downward, while inert with dullard gaze from languid eyes

Shining brightly, they pursue across the level fields a far
Inner thought whereof the still unseizéd phantom ever flies.

Get thee hence! O fellow man, avoid at noon these shining fields!
Or grief or gladness in thy bosom, fly! for nought is here for thee.
Nature is an empty thing and nought to any man she yields:
Only here the sun consumes; nought lives or sad or joyously.

But if sick of sorry laughter and the bitter sound of woe,
Or eager to forget the world and from its fret a way to win,
Wrath or pity left behind thee, thou the uttermost wouldst know
Of supremest exhaltation, Come! and steep thy soul herein.

Here the sun shall speak unto thee words of a sublimer sense;
In ardour of its quenchless flame yield up thy selfish being's dross,
With slow feet returning then to sinful cities far from hence,
Seven times thy heart made stronger in the furnace of thy loss.

CHARLES BAUDELAIRE

(1821–1867)

188. BEAUTY

I AM lovely as a dream of stone. Men sicken,
Against my breast deep-bruiséd. I bring sore
Travail of Love to poets, evermore
Dumb as the Dust that no desire may quicken.
Sphinx-like I am throned aloof; as plumes that thicken
The breast of swans my chill heart's white at core;
All rhythm-offending tumult I abhor
Who am never with mirth elate nor sorrow-stricken.

Poets before my noble poise and gesture
That hath the pomp of all the world for vesture,
Waste their sad days in study of dry reams;
For I, to keep these loving suitors loyal
Hold mirrors up, that make all beauty royal,
In wide eyes brimming with immortal beams.

189. THE GIANTESS

I WOULD it had been mine in Time remote
When Nature's womb a monstrous brood begat,
Upon some maiden giantess to dote,
As at a queen's feet some voluptuous cat;
To watch her body budding, with her mind
Growing in dreadful frolic; and dislimn
The sombre furnace gathering heat behind
The misty veil that in her eyes did swim;

Over her mighty shape to roam at ease,
Crawl on the slope of her enormous knees;
Or when the sultry heat of summer drove
My mistress prone athwart the grassy space,
Drowsed in the shadow of her breasts, not move
Like a still hamlet at a mountain's base.

190. TWILIT HARMONY

BEHOLD the hour is come when stems are thrilled,
And like swung censers flowers shed their fume;
Now thro' the air are sounds and odours spilled;
O wistful waltz within the dizzy gloom!

Now like swung censers flowers shed their fume;
Now like a torn heart hath the viol trilled;
O wistful waltz within the dizzy gloom!
Like a lone shrine the sky with sorrow is filled.

Now like a torn heart hath the viol trilled,
A shy heart that doth hate all dark and doom!
Like a lone shrine the sky with sorrow is filled.
The sun is drownéd in his blood's own spume.

A shy heart that doth hate all dark and doom
Drinks every drop from the waned light down-
spilled.
The sun is drownéd in his blood's own spume.
Thy memory lights me like a monstrance filled!

191. MY FORMER LIFE

UNDER vast colonnades that took the noon's
Sea-mirrored fire, I dwelt. In eve's dim light
The pillars showed majestic and upright
Like basalt caves wherein the wroth sea swoons;

The surge that mocked the sun's face and the moon's,
  Merged as in solemn and most mystic rite
  The hues of sunset waning on my sight
With mighty concord of immortal tunes.

I drank voluptuous calm amid the sheen
Of sea and sky and mirrored light serene;
  Where naked slaves with bodies steeped in balms,
Eager to soothe the sorrow undivined
Whereof I grew most weary, fanned the wind
  Athwart my brow with wafture of green palms.

192. THE PIT

GREAT Pascal had his pit always in sight.
  All is abysmal—deed, desire, or dream
  Or speech! Full often over me doth scream
The wind of Fear and blows my hair upright.
By the lone strand, thro' silence, depth and height,
  And shoreless space that doth with terrors teem . . .
  On my black nights God's finger like a beam
Traces his swarming torments infinite.

Sleep is a monstrous hole that I do dread,
  Full of vague horror, leading none knows where;
    All windows open on infinity,
  So that my dizzy spirit in despair
Longs for the torpor of the unfeeling dead.
    Ah! from Time's menace never to win free!

193. HYMN

TO her the dearest, the most fair
That fills my heart with light sublime,
The seraph of immortal pray'r,
Salute throughout immortal time!

She fills my life as from the south
A salt air that the sea-wind brings,
And soothes my never quenchéd drouth
With savour of eternal springs.

A redolence that sweetens all
The air in some most dear demesne,
A censer that some hand lets fall
To smoulder in the dark unseen.

O how, unsullied love, to tell
With any truth the thing thou art?
A grain of musk that still doth dwell
Deep-hid in my unaging heart?

To her the dearest, the most fair
That brings me joy and all my pow'rs,
The seraph of immortal pray'r,
Salute throughout immortal hours!

194. EXOTIC PERFUME

WHEN with shut eyes in autumn twilight dim
I breathe thy warm breast's odour, then I see
That happy shore where everlastingly
The sun smites downward from his burning rim;

An idle land where Nature in her whim
Breeds many a strange and sweetly burdened tree;
Where women gaze from candid eyes and free,
And the nude men are sinewy and slim.

Thine odour bears me to that blesséd zone:
Yonder the limp sails to the yard-arms cling,
Still weary with their long sea-voyaging;
The perfume of green tamarinds is blown
About my nostrils, and to me grows one
With voices of the sailors as they sing.

195. THE DEAD MISTRESS

WHEN, O my dark belovéd, thou shalt drowse
Beneath black marble, and thy bed-chambér
Shall be deep-delvéd and thy pleasure-house
Some sodden cavern whence thou mayst not stir;
When thy head-stone shall so with weight oppress
Thy breast and supple thighs that it shall stay
Thy heart from beating and thy foot no less
From hasting down the old adventurous way,—
The grave that knows my inmost heart's desire
Shall thus, night-long, my deathless wish repeat:
"Thou who of thy sweet self didst baulk the buyer,
How should I spare thee now, adulterous cheat,
From Death's indignity?" Then woman, wail!
The worm shall suck thy burning body pale.

196. SIN

FOR me the most foul demon still doth plot;
About me like the imponderable air
He flows. I drink him, and straightway am hot
With shameful lusts the tongue may not declare.

And since he knows how I love form, he wins
My soul in woman's guise, or else he'll tell
Some pious tale of washing out my sins
To tempt me to a draught that's brewed in Hell.
He leads me far away from God's clear eyes,
Halt and most sore still am I onward lured
To endless plains of speechless miseries,
Whereon unto my weary eyes and blurred
He shows red scars, foul raiment, and the shape
Of gory Ruin with her wounds a-gape.

197. SELF-COMMUNING

BE wise, my sorrow, quit thy vain unrest.
Now falls the twilight of thine eager plea;
The dim haze wraps the city vaporously
In peace or leaves long weariness unblest.
Now doth the soulless rabble, lust-possest,
Beneath the unsparing goad of Pleasure flee
To reap remorse in foul satiety.
Come, O my sorrow, on serener quest.

Behold the lost years of thy life that lean
From heaven's high balcony in garments mean;
Behold Regret from the deep waters rise.
While the dim sun drifts downward to his bed,
Hearken how eastward with unechoing tread
The soft Night draws her long shroud down the skies.

198. DEATH

HAUL up the anchor, captain old, O Death, for it is time;
We weary of the listless shore. Cast off, and so to sea!

Though cloud above and wave below be black as inky slime,
Our hearts are beaming cores of light to dare the dark with thee!

Pour out thy poison draught, and of thy comfort let us drink;
So fierce the fuel burns our brain that headlong we would sweep,
Or Hell or Heaven for our port, thro' sunless gulfs to sink,
And hail the unknown dark to find a shore beyond the deep!

HENRI MURGER

(1822–1861)

199. MEMORIES

HAVE you forgotten, dear Louise,
That flowery strip of garden old
Where I one night your hand did squeeze
Athrob with love too full to hold?
Our lips in vain sought words to say,
And knees touched knees where we did sit
Beneath the willow-boughs asway . . .
Say, do you still remember it?

Have you forgotten, dear Marie,
The rings we placed upon our thirds,
The hot sun setting goldenly,
The shady wood so full of birds,
The fountain where we met of yore
That babbled thro' the summer heat—
That trysting-place and many more . . .
Say, do you still remember it?

Have you forgotten, dear Christine,
That tiny room once redolent,
My own sky-scraping chamber mean,
The soft May nights so blithely spent?
Those starry nights when stars would say
"As we do, drop thy veils, O Sweet!
And let thy lover have his way" . . .
Say, do you still remember it?

Louise is dead, and Marie goes
By sad ways downward to the mire;
Pale Christine like a flower reblows
Far off to suns of southern fire.
Louise and Marie and Christine,
For me are all three turned to clay,
Our love is dust, and I with teen
Alone recall that happier day.

LOUIS BOUILHET

(1822–1869)

200. SPRING

RISE from your bed for the Spring is born this morning;
Yonder in the dell a rosy veil's adrift;
All the garden thrills and sings; the sun upon your window
Dazzles like a laughing face when eyelids lift.

Yonder on the trellis arch the crimson roses cluster,
Making heaven redolent with soft, sweet breath;
All alone the vine is bare, and mid the bursting flowers
Creeps along the ancient wall, a snake in death.

Round the laden lilac-trees rustle in their swarming
Butterflies and blue flies amid the bloom;
And the wild wood hyacinth chiming on its belfry
Rouses love that lay asleep in forest gloom.

Now that April sows abroad her troop of ox-eye daisies,
Leave your heavy cloak behind, and hark how sweet
Sings the bird that calls you, your sister periwinkles
Smiling up into your eyes from eyes that greet.

Come, come away! for the springs are clear at morning;
Nay, dear, wait no longer for the hot noon hour;
Fain would I wander while the meadows still are dewy,
Telling of my love for you where fruit-trees flow'r.

LOUIS MÉNARD

(1822–1901)

201. STOICISM

BRAVE strength breeds freedom, for each load we bear
Tries courage and doth temper it. Be king
Of thine own mind, thy conscience following
The God unfailing that is shrinéd there.
Thinkest thou then the august powers that steer
The golden spheres will for thy pleasure swing
Out of their course? In silence suffering,
Play thou the man uprightly without fear.

The Gods alone know if man's soul survives:
But steadfast is the labour of just lives,
Be they no more than day-long. With calm breath
They leave appraisal to the appointed judge
Who for the right meet Death, and nothing grudge
In envy of the Gods that know not death.

THEODORE DE BANVILLE

(1823–1891)

202. BALLADE OF THE FOREST HAUNTERS

STILL do they sing, the swarm of mocking fays
Well sheltered by the thorn and holly-leaves,
Who feel the light winds' tender, frolic ways;
And Dian still the lean wolf-pack bereaves
Of all its courage—she whose cunning weaves
A bower to hide her heart in. Many a hind
Still worships her. And when the moon doth blind
In her white splendour poured from a clear sky,
With lovely locks adrift in the still wind,
Fair Dian thro' the forest fareth by.

The water-lilies and the crispéd bays,
The chilly elf, the soft-eyed sprite that grieves,
Spin round the red dwarf in a mystic maze,
Linked hand in hand beneath the nodding leaves.
And green sylphs play the mummer, till upheaves
A tall form on the darkness half divined;
Whereon is heard long sobbing on the wind,
A sigh of grief for all things gone awry,
And dumb feet tear the ivy-stems that bind:
Fair Dian thro' the forest fareth by.

'Tis Dian seeking trophies in her chase,
That hears the groan that loud the spent stag gives,
Half-stifled; then the air's rude welcome lays
A rosy chillness on the limb that cleaves;
Her hounds, grown wroth with the loud cries she heaves,
Haste onward to her bidding swift as wind.
The Goddess tall whose fiery gaze can blind
Draws tight the bow and lets her arrows fly;
Then, shaking wide her wavy locks untwined,
Fair Dian thro' the forest fareth by.

Prince, it is time we left the dust behind,
And stony ways whereon the hard wheels grind.
In forest arbours far from human eye,
The city of our questing we may find
Where Dian thro' the forest fareth by.

203. TO THE FONT-GEORGES

SILENT fields where I was glad
When I was a little lad,
And my happy days did hold
Threads of gold!

O Font-Georges that once I knew
Where the robin-redbreasts flew,
And the nightingale also
Singing low!

Cottage white whereon the vine
Long of stem and serpentine
Drank the dew-drops with its leaves
From the eaves!

Crystal stream that once did roll
Shadowed by the upright bole
Of a hollow walnut-tree
Steadfastly!

Chilly streams and freshets who
Feeling for the griefs I knew,
Trembled in the time gone by
At my cry!

Pool where washerwomen were
Full of song and void of care
Beating on the board with might
Linen white!

Centenarian elder-tree
Whose hoar forehead I did see,
Thunder-stricken thrice and yet
Firmly set!

Arbours cool and copses wild
In the grassy sward enisled,
Where to every wind that played
Poplars swayed!

Heavy purple grapes that hung
On the hillside vines and clung
To the laden stems that went
Earthward bent;

Where when autumn-time came in
In her merriment would spin
Round the press the vintage-sprite
At twilight!

Briars whose ruddy fruit doth bleed,
In the ravines thrown for seed,
As of oaks the acorns are
Sown afar!

Osier-stems whose murmurs light
Fill the ring-dove with affright,
Willow blue, the far away's
Sunset blaze!

Boughs with ruddy cherries bent,
Reaping girls surprised that went
Wading where the waters fleet
With bare feet!

Leafy arbours, rills, and lanes;
Smell of leaves and grasses; plains,
Shades, and rocks that often drew
Me to you!

Rivers! forests! silence stilled!
O what joys my childhood filled!
My fond soul to you doth feel
Far less leal

Than to this poor joyless plot
Where green leaf and rose are not,
And the antique yew-trees raise
Sombre sprays,

To this sandy path that is
Dearer for the untold bliss
Of the hour when first I heard
Her soft word!

Where my love, with musing mind
Gently her sweet self resigned,
Leaning on my arm, and so
Speaking low,

Thoughts adrift, the while she tore
Leaf by leaf the flower she bore
With a heedless hand that left
All bereft,

At the hour when from the brink
Trembling stars emerge, and link
On the sky that shines or low'rs
Silver flow'rs.

204. TO THÉOPHILE GAUTIER

THE poet snares his prize
As in a fowler's noose,
Then plies
The chisel gravers use.

For, that his blade may wreak
On metal of hard core
His freak,
Deep must he carve and bore.

Hard is the task! You hold
As I, the Muse must find
The old
Strict bondage to her mind;

That, shining, firm, the flow
Of lovely line hard-wrought

Doth show
Smooth-browed the labouring thought.

For you who do bestride
Exalted, the wild horse
Soft-eyed
That down the skies doth course;

O! you who have the sleight
To snare in net of words
Your bright
Dream-pinions like a bird's;

Master who mak'st us fain
Of the green laurel, still
You deign
To ply the tool with skill.

205. "WE'LL GO NO MORE THE WOODLAND WAY . . ."

WE'LL go no more the woodland way, the laurel-leaves are clipt,
The little cupids in the pool, the naiads on the sill
Behold again the sunlit wave where beam and shadow dipt
On waters poured from cups they held, now silent grown and still.
The laurel-leaves are clipt, and the weary stag at bay
Now trembles at the sounding horn; we'll go no more astray
Where troops of lovely children once went frolicking their fill
Beneath the glance of lilies dewy-eyed and dewy-lipt.

Behold the scythe that shears the grass, the shattered leaves that spill!
We'll go no more the woodland way, the laurel-leaves are clipt.

EUGÈNE MANUEL

(1823–1901)

206. THE CRADLE

FOR nine long months she made her mother's vows
To lay her God-sent baby in a shrine
Most fit to hold him; it must far outshine
The cot wherein the sons of kings may drowse.
Out on your simple deal, your supple boughs!
The artist drew the cot of her design:
It must be pearl let into rosewood fine,
Though gold indeed were proper for his house.

Nought seems too costly, linen or fine lace
To swathe with whiteness the soft baby face
Upon the pillow on his birthday morn.
Now is he come, her little son, her pride!
And lo! the cradle he must sleep inside
Is made of oak, and to God's acre borne.

ANDRÉ THEURIET

(1833–1907)

207. THE VINE IN BLOSSOM

ALONG the vines the blossoms thrive,
To-night just twenty years are mine. . . .
Ah! but it's good to be alive

And feel the veins that seethe and strive
  Like the crushed grape that turns to wine.

My brain's with idle thoughts abrim;
  I wander in a tipsy swoon;
I run and drink the air I skim . . .
Is it the draught that pricks my whim,
  Or blossom on the vine-festoon?

But ah! what odour freights the air
  From out the clusters of the vine . . .
Ah! had I but the heart to dare
Clasp something . . . some one . . . anywhere . . .
  Within these wanton arms of mine!

I fleet, as fearful as a fawn,
  Beneath the loaded trellises;
I lay me amid blade and awn,
And on the bramble-shaded lawn
  I taste the wild red raspberries.

And to my lips that pant in drouth
  It seems as though a kiss were blown
On breezes from the tender south;
As though a soft and scented mouth
  Moved down to mingle with my own.

O strange delight, O stranger dearth!
  O! tendrils of the vine about,
O! blossoms trailing in your mirth,
Is Love still roaming on the earth,
  And how may lovers find him out?

ARMAND SILVESTRE

(1837–1901)

208. THE VENUS OF MILO

NO live girl's body hath such pride impassioned;
  Such beauty is beyond Earth's brittle clay.
From the hard marble was her statue fashioned
  In lands where once of old the Gods held sway.

No cruel soul that ever foils love's hoping,
  Could hide behind that bosom and that brow;
And those twin summits from her torso sloping
  Could sheathe no heart was traitor to its vow.

Like a steep rock her throat leans heavenward, yearn-
  For pure betrothal with diviner life; [ing
And thwarts the tide of passion in us, spurning
  The soiled caresses of our souls at strife.

O Rock upright amid our dust and ashes!
  O lantern rising on our bitter strand!
O statue whence the antique thought still flashes
  Above us like a tempest-fluttered brand!

O wardress of the sacred stairway spiring
  To perfect beauty on the heights afar,
Where we behold with dread our soul's desiring;
  O he who did thy marble body mar

Struck deep the poet! For thine arms in breaking,
  Daughter of Gods, O deathless Beauty, bare
The souls of all men downward, heav'n forsaking,
  Into the squalid vortex of despair.

209. IMMORTALITY

WHERE goes the starry quire?
Whereto our hearts aspire
  To hail the eternal light.
Our soul to theirs uplift
That golden-wingéd drift
  Athwart the solemn night.

Shade on that span immense
But wardens light intense
  From gates that Death throws wide.
Shade is but the dark way
That leads from yesterday
  To morrows glorified.

Pursue the sacred stars
That mount beyond the bars
  Of day in linkéd light.
As they to Death we steer,
As they we wane when near
  The day that hath no night.

210. PROMETHEUS

HIS galled flesh writhing on the rock, he thrilled
  With endless lamentation the lone sky.
  "Consort most foul whose carrion food am I,
Bear off my heart and let thy brood be filled.
From my red wound not all the blood is spilled.
  There mayst thou glut. Thy gorged beak cannot
  My spirit with the supreme agony, [try
Live tomb most avid of my flesh unkilled!

Most mournful ravener, let thy beak not halt
But rive my entrails with a ruthless edge:
Not direst torture of thy claws can mate
The torment of the mocking azure vault,
The stars that laugh on an unreachéd ledge,
The calmness of the heaven that I hate!''

LÉON DIERX

(1838–1912)

211. OCTOBER EVENING

A TREMOR slides from the hill-slopes down to the plains;
From the hill-slopes and from the woods, in the plain and the croft
A tremor of night passes on to the country lanes.
—O! the Angelus bell in the sunset chiming aloft!—
Under a chilly gust the songs grow soft,
Afar the sound of singing and laughter dies
In the dense mist rising up as a breath upcurls,
A slow breath scattering far its last fond sighs,
Its farewell sighs where the dark wood shakes in dread,—
It shakes in dread, and the dry leaf eddying whirls,
Whirls and falls on paths that no feet tread.

212. WINTER DAY

THIS morning not one beam cleaves the cloud-blind,
The laggard sun upsurges with sealed eye,
And mine own gaze is dull with apathy;
With the dim hour, O Soul, content thy mind!

Dead stars fade out like sparks upon the wind
Blown from the smithy, and night's blossoms die;
I sink in mine own sorrow utterly;
Come, ponder, O Soul, the dark hours left behind!

Night's angels now draw down their sombre pall;
They will not hang their lanterns on the steep.
Think of the tearless crowds that deathward creep,
Of shrines where now no human footsteps fall!
Thou art but a grave, O Soul, a dusty heap;
Then ponder on sleep and dark funereal!

ACHILLE MILLIEN

(1838–)

213. THE THREE SISTERS

AS daylight passes there go three lasses
Hand holding hand as they move down the lane,
There's one singing gaily, and one smiling palely,
And one in her sorrow that sighs for her swain.

"O what is this hunger of love?" saith the younger,
The second makes answer, "I know not. They say
The heart dies without it."—"Nay, sisters dear, doubt it:
I who know," saith the elder, "am dying away."

SULLY PRUDHOMME

(1839–1907)

214. THE INHERITOR

I AM kind-hearted, wish no creature ill,
  Yet take of oxen stunned by hands more strong,
  And, spite my gentleness, am glad the thong
Should make my spent horse hasten up the hill.
I am fair-minded, deem the poor man still
  My brother, and throw crumbs unto the throng;
  A dead, self-stinting forbear laboured long
That I, from a full board, might take my fill.

Honest, my sleek well-being knows no debt.
I eat of bread begot of others' sweat
  On fields made fertile by my sires' dead help.
Thus on unending massacre I browse.
Nature's elect, I forage or I drowse,
  Bland-eyed and bloody as an ogre's whelp.

215. THE STRANGER

I OFTEN wonder with what blood doth beat
  This truant heart that all delight doth tire,
  These thoughts and feelings that unquenched aspire
As though unending bliss for them were meet.
Where is the paradise where thou hadst seat?
  In what King's army hast thou taken hire?
  Since vileness here doth flout thine eyes' desire,
What beauty is thy soul's right counterfeit?

Surely my sorrow for a heav'n unknown
And my divine disgust spring not unsown:
  Vainly I grope within my heart of mud;

And aye bewildered by my sobbing breast,
Hearken the grief of my strange kingly guest
Who veils the glory of his land and blood.

216. BODIES AND SOULS

O! happy fleshly lips that glow
With kisses love-besought or ta'en,
And happy breasts whose breathings flow
To merge their sighs where they be fain.

O! happy hearts athrob with blood,
In loving kindness side by side,
And happy arms of loverhood
That hold each other fondly tied;

And happy fingers too that clasp,
And eyes that gaze, and bodies prone
That are at peace in slumber's hasp,
And nought at all when life is flown.

But what have souls but wretchéd spite?
That must for ever live aloof,
Like flames that glow with ardent light
Behind a lantern lustre-proof.

Against their prison's cloudy wall
They feel their burning kinship urge,
And vainly on their neighbour call
Whose ardour cannot meet and merge.

For these that are immortal held
Were better far a single day
Of life to feel their longing quelled
And in espousal burnt away!

217. THE GREAT BEAR

THE Great Bear shone, an archipelago
  Upon a shoreless ocean, through long eld
  Ere wandering shepherds from Chaldea beheld,
Or ever weary soul knew fleshly woe.
Innumerable beings to and fro
  Have wandered by its dazzling radiance spelled;
  And, careless of the gaze it hath compelled,
When the last man lies dead it still shall glow.

"Thou art no Christian then!" believers chide.
O! fatal outline that doth ever bide,
  Seven golden nails on the dark void of air.
Thy slow march, thy chill light blur faith's far goal:
'Twas sight of thee that first bestirred my soul
  To seek the meaning of my nightly pray'r.

218. CHAINS

A RHYTHM can link me with melodious air,
  And velvet's softness with this rose I feel;
A smile can take my eyes as in a snare,
  A kiss can hold my lips as with a seal.

In such frail bonds my life is held by love
  Of thousand other souls whereto I cling;
How soft soever be the gusts that move
  They rend in me some fleshly fastening.

219. HYMN TO DESIRE

O DIE not yet, divine Desire, whose flight
  Doth fan all human things,
O thou who givest birth unto delight
  By folding of thy wings.

Strange wayfarer, and is thy love outgrown
  Made lip and flower unseal?
The hidden sources of the world unknown
  Wilt thou no more reveal?

On Beauty's face rain kisses, O Desire!
  Into the pit of Truth
Bear thou thy torch's still unquenchéd fire
  Fair Son of fading Youth!

Still give us dreams, still give us love, the great
  Unending thirst that, ever drawing up,
Is born again to life insatiate
  Out of the drainéd cup!

ÉMIL BLÉMONT

(1839–)

220. THE FALL OF THE YEAR

AH! who hath not joy of chill Autumn's slow coming?
  Who finds not delight in her wistful wan face?
When skies are all gray and the seas are all foaming,
  Ah! then with sweet sorrow the heart fills apace.

Then the long day seems twilit at noon as at morning;
In the air full of tears, black and bare hang the boughs;
Then under the thatch the bright faggots are burning,
And fog's on the roof of the old manor-house.

With the pallor of death now the fallow-land blanches;
Nigh the stable that shelters the cattle from harm,
The reek rises upward between the slim branches
In spirals that curl from the litter still warm.

We walk full of dreams like a man that is sleeping;
We smell the sweet odours of harvests gone by,
And memory shines in the midst of our weeping
Like a star that is seen on the far-away sky.

We hearken no more to the cry of the swallow;
The sap shrinks away from the frost that doth bind;
All is mute. Love alone hath no time that is fallow,
But blossoms and sings in the teeth of the wind.

VILLIERS DE L'ISLE-ADAM

(1840–1889)

221. AVOWAL

FOREST and plain are gone,
And April's ancient spell . . .
Give me thy lips; thereon
The woodland wind shall swell.

Lost is the sullen stir
Of Ocean's endless pain . . .

Speak, and my soul shall hear
His surging tides again.

In royal woe I weep,
And dream of suns gone blind . . .
O! bosom hide me deep
As nights bereft of wind.

HENRI CAZALIS

(1840–1909)

222. STORM IN THE NIGHT

UP leapt the wave as a wild unbroken stallion
High into the air flinging wild his spumy mane,
When after sojourn long in the stilly lowland ways
I, on a night of storm, beheld the sea again.

Loud shrieked the wind with his shrilly voice reverberate;
Wave after wave charged the rocky ledge of land;
There, as I stood alone, before the sea's dishevelling,
Calm breathed my spirit on the storm-embattled strand.

Up in the sky, seeking cover like a frighted thing,
Swift fled the moon letting fall her misty beams;
Far on the foamy main the breakers roared unceasingly
Whipt by the wind to a rage of writhing streams.

Hast thou, O Nature, hidden sorrows inconsolable?
Doth thy deep soul ache with agonies uneased?
Are the wild storms but thy salt tears falling bitterly,
And the loud winds but thy wailing unappeased?

Dost thou too suffer, O great Mother from whose
womb we come?
We ev'n as thou in thy nights of blackest shade,
Writhe in our pain with our stormy passions goading
us;
In thine own image, prone to darkness are we made.

223. THE HARPS OF DAVID

SPACIOUS, splendid and pacific, the vast night
unrolled before us,
We listened to the chanting of the billows on the
deep,
Our heart-beats all bewildered by the music that they
bore us,
And all the harps of David in the heavens seemed
to weep.

The moon rose wanly in the sky, and I a dream was
weaving:
I dreamt that even she did sing my sorrow to
allay,
And all the fond waves shoreward borne with passion
in their heaving
But reached the strand to kiss your feet and ebb
their life away;

That we were two without a third in all the world's
vast spaces;
That I was erst an errant soul in darkness all adrift;
But that the harps of gold that thrilled the deep night's
hollow places
Had made me sob aloud for love, and brought me
you for gift;

Whereon a peacefulness arose, and splendid beams
were shaking,
The while I wept and laid my brow upon your knees
for troth,
And like my heart the heavens above, no longer void
and aching,
Were spanned by the vast soul of God outspread
above us both.

224. FOR EVER

WITHHOLD thy love, though life betrays,
No whit, but dream and still desire;
And bare thy heart on human ways
Though nought but wounds fulfil desire.

Though all be vain, in truth still trust;
Still love, desire and dream amain;
So soon the heart returns to dust,
With love now let it teem amain.

Drink deep of art and human worth;
Heart high pursue thy loyal way;
Still walk as poet lord of earth,
Wear purple robes in royal way.

For love and dream alone are true:
Like swords of lightning crossed in air,
Athwart the heaven's starless blue
Our life's a flame that's lost in air.

Alone in ardent passion's light
Our eyes see clearly ere we go
Into an everlasting night
With no return from where we go.

Consume thy brand, throw wide thy spark,
And let the flame upthrust again;
Think of the grave's unending dark
When thou art turned to dust again.

So near us yawns the dreadful pit;
Or ere we plunge beyond desire,
Now let the brand of life be lit,
O heart fulfil thy fond desire!

BOOK VI

TO

R. GEOFFREY W. SAW

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ

(1842–1898)

225. APPARITION

THE moon grew sad, and weeping seraphim,
Musing amid the vaporous flowers aswim,
With slow bows from the sobbing viols drew
White tears that sank in their corónals blue.
It was the blesséd day of your first kiss.
My reverie, eager with new miseries,
Was all a-swoon with perfume of shy grief
That leaves the heart to gather its own sheaf,
And frets not, nor yet sickens of its prize.
I wandered, and the worn way held my eyes
When in the street I saw your sun-girt hair
And you all smiling in the twilit air.
I took you for that elf who, crowned with beams,
Once passed before me in my childish dreams,
And shed white posies of sweet-smelling flow'rs
Star-like for tiny hands in snowy show'rs.

226. WIND FROM THE SEA

WEARY is the flesh, alas! with many books the eyes are dim.
Flight! I feel that birds are wild to sweep the far-off skies, and skim
The unknown foam! For nought on land shall now the gypsy heart be stayed,
Not ancient gardens mirrored back by limpid eyes, since it doth wade

Into the sea-borne flood. O nights! not the clear
lamplight's lonely tryst,
Nor white allure of sheets unscrawled, nor yet the
suckling infant kist
By the young wife. I must away! The steamer
rocks her ropes and spars!
O haul the heavy anchor up and set all sail for tropic
stars!
Now weariness at last outworn by ruthless hope's
unsparing whip
Still strains toward white handkerchiefs that wave
their farewells from the ship.
Nay, but these masts that brave the storm, may they
not bend above the foam
Like wind-broke spars on derelicts that mastless drift
far, far from home
Or happy haven-isles that flow with wine and oil
that never fails? . . .
But hearken, O my heart, the singing mariners that
hoist the sails!

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA

(1842–1905)

227. CENTAURS' FLIGHT

RED-HANDED and with savage thews afire,
They fly toward their stronghold on the fell;
Fear on their flanks and death in front, they smell
A lion lurking in the darkness dire.
O'er torrent, gully, and entangled brier
They leap, down-treading serpents terrible,

While far away into the sky up-swell
High hills about Olympus' topmost spire.

At times a charger in the maddened raid
Rears upward, and swings round with dreadful heed,
Then in a bound rejoins the wild stampede,
For he has seen, by the bright moonbeams made,
An awful menace of enormous breed
In monstrous girth of Herculëan shade.

228. THE TEPIDARIUM

MYRRH sweetens all their supple limbs; they muse
With flesh not loathful of the chilly flaws.
A brazier mid the steady wafture draws
Now flame now shadow o'er their pallid hues.
On cushioned beds the crimson swathings fuse
With marble and amber of fair limbs at pause,
Upright or bending thro' the filmy gauze
That shows the suave lines of their pliant thews.

An Asian woman, bare amid the billow
Of the warm air-stream, like a writhen willow
Lifts nerveless arms and shivers in the wind;
Whereat the Ausonian maidens pale as swans,
Do marvel at the swarthy tresses twined
Sleek and untrammelled round her bust of bronze.

229. TO A TRIUMPHER

CHISEL upon thine arch, great king, a knot
Of captive slaves and many an agéd chief,
With armour and the trophied spears in sheaf,
Despoiléd ships, and festal altars hot.

Whether thou be high-born or churl-begot,
Thy lineage, honours, titles, long or brief,
Engrave them on thy frieze or bas-relief,
Lest in the time to come men know thee not.

Time's fatal weapon shakes. Wouldst thou hand down
The rumour of unconquerable renown?
A weed shall rend the trophies of thy might;
When all thy tale of marble pomp lies tumbled
Some mower on grass-smothered stone shall smite
And mar his blade upon thy glory humbled.

230. THE ROSE WINDOW

THIS window hath seen many a dame and lord
In robes of azure, pearl and gold that shone
Bend low beneath the priestly benison
Their hoods and helms whereon its radiance poured.
These at the trumpet-blast would seize the sword
And those the hooded falcon would set on
For chace of skyey game, their masters gone
To hunt for Christ the Saracenic horde.

Prone lie they all on marble hearses pale.
A lean hound props them in their silk or mail;
They do speak, nor listen, nor give sign.
Only from eyes of stone, as though undimmed,
They seek and see not on the glass a-shine
The unfading blossom of the Rose there limned.

231. ON THE OLD BRIDGE

ON graven chalice or on hasp of gold
With the first beam the valiant master bent,
His brushes ready and his hand intent
On Latin mottoes to be smoothly scrolled.

Over the bridge the silvern belfries tolled,
The spurred heel smote, the priestly raiment went;
The mounting sunbeams in the clear sky blent,
And lovely girls fared onward aureol'd.

And fain, whom wanton ardour swiftly drove,
The wistful lads forgot their lover's seal
And left the clasped hands on the rings undone.
While, with a slim blade sharp as murderer's steel,
Cellini, without heed, wrought on alone
A dagger's hilt whereon the Titans stove.

232. THE VISION OF KHEM

I

'TIS noon. Mid burning air and dreadful rays
The old river rolls a desultory stream;
From the blind zenith the bright earthward beam
Falls sheer. Stern Phra sets all the land ablaze.
The sphinxes huge with never-flinching gaze
And prone flanks crouching under sands that teem,
Fix staring eyeballs as in endless dream
On stony peaks that vault the unmeasured space.

Sole, like a speck upon the sky's wan sheet,
Far off the questing vultures wheel and wheel;
Both men and beast to the vast flame succumb.
The hot earth cracks; the Anubis very still,
His image midmost in the exultant heat,
Barks at the sun with brazen mouth and dumb.

II

Old Nilos takes the round moon's silver glance.
There is a stir within the burial-field
Where each proud king in pose hieratic sealed
Lies where they laid him in his mummied trance.
As in the days of Rhamses there advance
Vast swarms unnumbered that are marched and wheeled
Without a sound through the dark night, and yield
Their bodies to a rock-hewn necromance.

Leaving on walls their counterfeited show,
After the trophy-bearing priests they go
In honour of Ammon, Lord of the sunbeam.
Sphinxes and Rams, red-girdled, in amaze
Rear on their haunches with astonied gaze,
Waked with a start from their eternal dream.

III

The innumerable multitude grows more.
Now empty loom the coffins in the crypt.
Their dead are risen. From each cornice slipt,
Again on high the sacred falcons soar.
Beasts, people, kings in one wide concourse pour.
The gold crest gleams on ghastly brows; tight-lipt
Are their lean mouths in old bitumen dipt.
The great Gods lead: Hor, Khnoum, Ptah, Neith, Hathor.

Then comes the train of Ibis-headed Toth
Twice-crowned, about them the embroidered cloth
Thick with blue lotus-buds. The errant band
Thro' ruined shrines in pomp triumphal goes
O'er chilly pavements whence the wan moon throws
The immeasurable shadows on the sand.

233. ANTIQUE COIN

STILL Etna bears the red wine and the gold
Made glad Theocritus in times antique;
But in our day 'twere vain for him to seek
That fruit whereof his gracious verses told.
As bond-slave bartered and as harlot sold,
The blood of Anjou Brave and Arab Sheik
Now strives in Arethusa with the Greek;
Her face hath lost the godlike lines of old.

Time hastes. All dies. Ev'n marble towers tumble.
Old Agregente's citadel is down;
Still Syracuse sleeps where the blue unfurls:
Only on silver coins that cannot crumble
Love set unsullied in its old renown
The immortal beauty of Sicilian girls.

234. THE BATH

LIKE the once lovely monster, in the tide
Wade man and beast, a bare, unbridled twain
'Mid golden gusts of bitter, sea-blown rain,
Their limber lines athwart the sun descried.
The savage stallion and the churl astride
Deep draughts of the sea's briny odour drain
Glad of the icy thrill on flesh and mane
From sprays that on the Atlantic billows ride.

The surge swells, runs, rears upright, shatters. He
Shouts loudly. The horse neighs, and with his tail
Smites on the rushing blue as with a flail;
While on the sky, with blown hair, shudderingly
They bear a steaming front that breaks in hail
The foamy lash of the assaulting sea.

235. WIND FROM THE SEA

GARDEN and wold by Winter's hand are gript.
All things lie dead. Over the rock's dull gray
The Atlantic rollers break in endless spray.
The withered petals from the stem are stript.
Yet do I feel an odour honey-dipt
Blown from the sea about my nostril play
Kindling my heart-ache for the far away;
From what strange land has this sweet perfume slipt?

Nay, but I know. Three thousand leagues it flew
Out from the West, where the Antilles blue
Swoon in the ardour of the tropic zone;
And I upon this surf-beat Breton strand
Have breathed the truant breezes that once fanned
The bud that in America was blown.

236. THE BED

LET it be draped with serge or with brocade,
Sad as a bier or merry as a troth,
There man's begot, begets, and dreams in sloth,
Child, husband, grandsire, wife or virgin maid.
Gay or funerëal, with God's water spray'd
Under the cross, or blest with palm, there both
Begins and ends his life, in its long growth
From the first dawn till the last candles fade.

Rustic and shuttered, or, sundown or dawning,
Flaunting its gold and crimson for an awning,
Shapen of rude oak or of sycamore;
Happy is he that slumbers without sin
In the ancestral bed that, stout and hoar,
Bids welcome and farewell to all his kin.

FRANÇOIS COPPÉE

(1842–1908)

237. THE RUINED HEART

MY heart was as a Roman palace fair
With granite and rare marble, till a band
Of ruthless passions bearing axe and brand
Swept like barbarians to make havoc there.
Then was there ruin and desolation where
Dwelt owls and vipers on the barren land;
Column and shard lay splintered on the sand,
And the smooth pathway teemed with briar and tare.

Thro' the unlighted day, the starless night
Before my palace's disastrous plight
Daunted, I stood alone and all uncheered,
Till thou didst bring thy starlike self, O bride!
Whereon to house our hallow'd love I reared
An humble hut from ruins of my pride.

CATULLE MENDÈS

(1842–1909)

238. CONSENTMENT

NOW Ahod on the plain kept countless sheep.
His spouse one summer day fell deep asleep
Under a tree nigh Bethel. While she lay
A vision passed before her, in this way:

Herseemed she from a dream was newly woke,
And Ahod was before her and thus spoke:
"Woman, arise and gird thee. Of my herd
Last year I sold an hundred sheep. One third
Is still unpaid of the full sum agreed.
But I am old and spent; and in my need
Whom may I trust? Get thee to Segor, bride,
And claim the thirty shekels still denied."

She murmured not of desert, thieves, or dread.
"Thy servant hears thy bidding, Lord," she said.
And when with lifted hand he pointed north,
She took her woollen raiment and went forth.

Now stony were the ways and ill to tread.
With tears that blinded and with feet that bled,
She fared till darkness fell, and on through night
Without or human sound or human sight,
Till on a sudden from the shadow smote
A savage scimitar across her throat,
And savage hands snatched off her robe of wool,
And left her dying in a bloody pool.

Thereon, in mortal terror, she awoke
And found her Lord beside her, who thus spoke:
"Woman, arise and gird thee. Of my herd
Last year I sold an hundred sheep. One third
Is still unpaid of the full sum agreed.
But I am old and spent; and in my need
Whom may I trust? Get thee to Segor, bride,
And claim the thirty shekels still denied."

She answered, "Thou hast spoken, Lord. I haste."
She called her brood about her. Then she placed

Her hands upon her first-born, and she bent
To kiss her Benjamin. And all intent
She took her woollen robe and forth she went.

239. EXHORTATION

THOU mayst be manly an thou wilt. Go! clench
thy hilt, and brave the squall
Where on the peaks the whirlwind shrieks, and chase
the wild stag till he fall.

Get thee to battle! Brows are bright on those that
fight. Win food and sleep
In fast and toil. Go! share the spoil with smugglers
on the mountain steep!

But in our soulless city ways, the barren days will
wear thee down,
Where tears but suit a griefless mute, and mirth but
masks a weeping clown.

As fountain spray but surges up to brim the cup of
pools below,
A watery plume it is our doom to waver ever to and
fro,—

Unstable wills by sloth worn out that shift about, and
know no peace,
Who in despair breathe living air and shrink in
dread from death's release.

240. SOROR DOLOROSA

STAY. Light not the lamp. But let us slake
Our eyes in shadow, and do thou unbind
Thy brown hair's glossy torrent for a blind
About the silent kisses that we take.

We are both outwearied with the old heartache.
The sun-encumbered sky hath been unkind.
Now let us sway in the voluptuous wind
That on night's melancholy sea doth wake.

Slow sweetness, surging slumber without dream,
Funereal ebb and flow in endless stream,
Thy hair wherein my drenchéd brow doth drown . . .
Calm eve that hateth life and fain would pause,
How slow the tide of dumb oblivion draws
Thro' these close-woven locks of sombre brown.

PAUL VERLAINE

(1844–1896)

241. "GOD SPAKE AND SAID . . ."

GOD spake and said, "Son, love me. Look and see
My piercéd side, my shining heart that bled,
And my maimed feet whereon the harlot shed
Her tears, and mine arms weighted painfully
With burden of thy sins! Behold the tree,
Nails, gall, the sponge, and all the wounds yet red
To win thee from the world's vile lustihead
Unto my Flesh and Blood that calls for thee.

Have I not loved thee even unto death,
O! brother mine in God, dear child begot
Of the same Holy Spirit? My harsh lot
Have I not borne? When direst sufferings rend,
I share thy sweat, I sob with thine own breath,
Thy neighbour in the dark, O hapless friend!"

242. "THE SKY ABOVE THE ROOFING LIES"

THE sky above the roofing lies
So blue, so calm!
A pine above the roofing plies
Its wafted palm.

The bell in yonder tower swings
In soft ding-dong.
A bird in yonder pine-tree sings
Its plaintive song.

My God, My God, all life is there,
How still, how sweet;
And peaceful sounds the wafted air
From mart and street.

What hast thou done that downward roll
Thy ceaseless tears—
What hast thou done, O wastrel soul,
With thy lost years?

243. "O HEARKEN THE SO GENTLE PLAINT"

O HEARKEN the so gentle plaint
That weeps alone to soothe your ill,
As shyly sounding and as faint
As ripples on a mossy sill!

You know the voice (once dear to you?);
But now the singer's hid away
And like a widow veiled from view,
Although she proudly fronts the day,

And thro' her fluttering weeds astream
  Before the gusty autumn wind
The steadfast star of truth doth beam
  Upon the troubled heart behind.

It saith, (this voice you hear again),
  True life is to the kind of heart;
That all of hate and malice wane
  To nothingness when we depart.

It tells the bright felicities
  Of simple hearts that seek their kin
In selfless bridal, and the bliss
  Of peace that seeketh nought to win.

O hearken the returning voice
  In spousal rapture singing clear!
O what can make the soul rejoice
  Like staunching of another's tear?

The soul that suffers without wrath
  Is but astray in passing wrong,
How plain to follow is the path!
  O! hearken the celestial song.

244. MY FAMILIAR DREAM

NOT seldom in my dreams a woman's eyes
  Gaze into mine love-brimmed and love-besought;
  This unknown woman knows my inmost thought,
And now has this and now another guise.
For her alone my heart unclouded lies,
  For her alone, alas! its maze is nought;
  A freshness in her healing hands is brought,
And weeping low, my fevered brow she plies.

If she be dark or fair I cannot tell,
Nor yet her name save that its sound is sweet
As those of loved ones we no more may greet.
Her gaze is like a statue's; and the swell
Of her grave voice afar seems to retreat
Like those dear voices grown inaudible.

245. GREEN

HERE fruit and flowers I bring to thee; green leaves and sprays I proffer;
My heart that beats for thee alone with them to thee I lift;
With thy two pale white hands flout not the humble gift I offer,
And may those lovely eyes of thine find sweetness in my gift.

Behold I come before thee with the dew still on my forehead,
The chilly wind of dawn thereon hath turned it icy frore;
Ah! suffer me to rest my load beside thy feet adoréd,
There dreaming I'll grow strong again to bear the load I bore.

My head upon thy maiden breast in sweet surrender leaving,
Therein the stir of kisses that thy lips have shed shall sound,
So shall I fall on quiet nigh thy dear heart's stormy heaving
And sleep awhile, when thy fond love its haven shall have found.

246. AUTUMN SONG

THE sobs are long
  On the violins
Of the barren throng
  Where no leaf spins;
And my heart's heavy
  And listless grown
At hearing ever
  Their monotone.

I catch my breath
  And I blanch, aghast
As the loud clock saith,
  "Thine hour is past."
And I remember
  The days long flown,
And thinking on them
  I weep alone;

And away I go
  In the evil wind
That starts to blow
  Like a thing unkind,
Hither and thither
  From sill to stone—
A drifting flotsam,
  A dead leaf blown.

247. "ERE THY SOFT RAY BE LOST"

ERE thy soft ray be lost
  O! waning star of morn,—
A host
  Of quails sing in the corn.

Light with thine ebbing spark
The poet's love-brimmed eyes.—
The lark
Climbs sunward to the skies.

Look downward upon earth
With eyes the dawn doth daze.—
What mirth
Amid the golden maize!

Then flash my thought like light
Down yonder, far away.—
All bright
The dew shines on the hay.

Ere her dear lids uplift,
Shine through them on her dream.—
Swift, swift!
Behold! the first sunbeam.

248. NEVERMORE

MEMORY, what wilt thou with me? Autumn gales
Baffle the bird's flight through the moaning air;
The sun hurls wide his steady beams that stare
O'er the sere wood wherethro' the north wind wails.
We two alone, and both with dreams astray,
With locks afloat in air and thoughts adrift,
When suddenly to me her eyes uplift
And her voice asks, "When wast thou happiest?
Say,"

As soft and song-like as when angels chaunt,
And my wan smile gives answer, else untold,

And my weaned mouth along her white hand
sips.
No flowers have scent like that the first ones hold,
No sounds have such sweet stress as those that haunt
The first-heard "Yes" from the belovéd lips.

249. A FORGOTTEN TUNE

A FRAIL hand hovering sets the keys astir
Wan-faced in the vague twilit rose and gray,
While like the wafture of light wings in air
A doting melody begins to sway,
Falters uncertain as with fear astray
In this room rife with all the sweet of Her.

And what is this suave to-and-fro that goes
Like fondling hands of my poor being fain?
What would you, wavering song? What longing flows
In the soft babble of your shy refrain,
Now wafted out in the wide air to wane
Beyond the window where the garden blows?

250. SONNET

ALL through the day down poured the traitorous flame
And lure of evil days. Now the sun's track
Throbs with its glamour. Close thine eyes, turn
back
From the most dire temptation—fly the shame!
Like hail the burning light hath downward sped,
Despoiled the hillside vintage, and left prone
The cornfields of the valley; the blue zone
Ev'n of redeeming heaven is ravishéd.

Then blench, and hie thee soberly to pray'r!
If yesterdays devour the morrows' bliss?
If madness, left behind, o'ertake thy way?
Shalt thou not slay anew old memories?
For the last wild assault do thou prepare!
And, lest the storm o'erwhelm thee, haste and pray!

TRISTAN CORBIÈRE

(1845–1875)

251. LETTER FROM MEXICO

"You gave the youngster into my care.—He's dead,
And many more along with him, poor little mate!
The crew . . . there is none.—There's two or three,
Will get back home.—It's fate. [so it's said

"Nothing's so fine as a sailor's life for a youth;
All the landlubbers pine for it sure enough—
Save the discomfort. So now you may see for truth
How prentice life is rough.

"I blub as I write that, hard old case as I be.
I'd have given my skin to save him and send him home . . .
There's no sense in it, I know . . . but don't blame
What has to be will come. [me.

"The fever's here as wild as the carnival,
We're all on our way to the graveyard to draw our grub.
The Zouave he calls it—our old Parisian pal—
Transplanting of the shrub.

"Cheer up! The world here cracks like a fly in the hand . . .
I found in his bundle some keepsakes he'd often kiss:
The portrait of a girl, Turk slippers, and
'A present for dear Sis.'

"To Mamma he bid me say: that his pray'rs didn't fail.
To Father: he'd sooner have died in some fierce assault.
Two angels were there beside him when he set sail:
A soldier. An old salt."

GEORGES BOUTELLEAU

(1846–)

252. THE AVENUE

CALM summer eves that once did hide
The loving bliss of man and maid,
Have kept their sweetness sanctified
Beneath the mingled maple shade.

And under the dim leafy arc
That heard their vows so fond and fain,
It seems as though we still may hark
Dead lovers ope their lips again.

The mysteries they babble low
Stir strange discomfort in the breast
Of those that solitary go
With ancient dreams all laid to rest.

And slowly they seek open air
Where beams still set the boughs afire,
Like agéd crones that quake to hear
The kisses of their old desire.

253. THE WILD DOVES

OVER gray skies or shining,
Skimming the tall palm-groves,
Where rose-tipt briars are twining,
Go by the wild gray doves.

Wide-winged for ever wending
If suns rise up or fall,
They follow the unending
Far glory of them all.

From every sky imploring
In torrid climes or chill,
New summits beyond soaring
And newer seasons still.

Thus year by year we wander,
Wild doves that never tire,
To find for ever yonder
Our haven of desire.

GABRIEL VICAIRE

(1848–1900)

254. DREAM SONG

YOU ask me whom in dream I see ?
It is a King's daughter, pardie!
And all for me are her love sighs.
Away, sweetheart, the moon doth rise.

In robe of satin white she streams;
She hath a silver comb that gleams.
The moon is high as grass unmown.
Away, sweetheart, I am thine own.

She hath a mantle all of gold,
While my poor homespun's worn and old.
Away, sweetheart, to Blissful Copse.
The moon's above the willow-tops.

As boys will snare a bird with glee,
Her soft white fingers fold on me.
The moon is in the boughs o'erhead.
Away, sweetheart, and weave thy thread

Thanks be to God, I well am ware
The boon is sweet that lovers share.
My love is lovely ; fond am I.
Away, sweetheart, the moon is high.

255. POOR LIZA

POOR Liza died two days ago,
And not a word foretold her doom.

Now on a stretcher she lies low
Set midmost in the church's gloom.

The Virgin straight upon her stares
Who sinned so sore among the quick.

Now at her feet a candle flares,
Set in a wooden candlestick.

Good folk, new-shriven, outward pass
In fearful haste to leave the ghost.

The curé mumbles through the mass,
Lest his lean steak be over-roast.

For thriftless folk his pray'rs are brief
That ever leave the coffers bare.

There's no one nigh for sign of grief;
You well might think a dog lay there.

Alone beside the door in dread
I kneel but nearer dare not go.

I think of the dead girl's dear head
That once the sunlight gilded so ;

And of her eyes like pansies blue
That were so soft awhile for me,

Her mouth that now finds nought to do,
And nevermore will smile for me.

Now all my life is torn in twain
By every stroke the belfry shakes,

And like a poplar in the lane
My soul within my body quakes.

Ah! Sweet, how you did give your face
In spring-time, cheek and brow and tress!

O Misery! Is there any place
Wherein our hearts find happiness?

Of all the lasses in our town
They said you had the warmest blood,

And now alone you're lying down
In four stout planks of beechen wood.

Farewell, our frolic gambolling!
Farewell, O fairest of our blooms!

No more in the mad dance you'll spring,
Nor trample on the clumsy grooms!

Your arm as ivory firm and smooth
Lies shrivelled as a thistle mown,

Your supple throat's as black, in sooth,
As all the sin that you have known.

Your lips that were as roses red,
And always quick with love's delight,

May now no more be openéd;
Your laughing eyes are sealed in night.

Now all your comeliness is spent
As any shepherd's burnt-out fire,

And you are gone like smoke that's blent
In air above the belfry spire.

Poor soul forlorn, say have you had
A glimpse of the good God on high?

Are you in Hell, and are you clad
In flames that from the furnace fly?

Does burning sulphur sheathe your head,
Or mitre made of molten ore?

Speak, speak! and is it true the dead
Die, death on death, for evermore?

If nine days' fast may win reprieve
From that dark way you're walking in,

And for your soul white raiment weave,
Nay, now will I straightway begin.

O'er flood and forest I will fare
With bleeding feet and heart that's riven,

To Notre Dame de Fourvières
And pray to Her to be forgiven.

Thrice blesséd is the hand that stirs
Her rosary of golden beads.

One single holy word of Hers
Can wash us pure of evil deeds,

And white as milk. Her nod can slay
The wickedness whereby we're lost.

And I will give Her on Her day
A summer gown, and one for frost;

And at the fair I'll buy anon
A windmill for Her Jesukin,

With ivory sails He'll blow upon,
And laugh with joy to see them spin.

AUGUSTE ANGELLIER

(1848–1911)

256. SONNET DEDICATORY

LIKE royal galleys be my verse here written
That trail their golden trappings thro' the deep,
Where under a silken dais with lilies litten
Upon an ivory bed the Queen doth sleep.
And set proud words like gonfalons appearing
Triumphant from their cordage as they go;
May lutes and cymbals make melodious hearing
With Love's own viols on their decks below;
May it be all ashine, with loud rhymes blended
Like salvos from the bulwarks; may it drift
With tumult of immortal airs attended;
May every mast green laurel-leaves uplift:

For through Time's spaces and its deeps uncharted
It bears thy dear name on, O royal-hearted!

257. SONNET

THUS shall we live our separate lives unknit,
  And vain appeals shall flesh and spirit make;
  Never one divine instant shall we slake
Our forlorn human passion infinite.
Then when the last long sleep we shall have won,
  They will bury thy dear body far from me;
  We shall be exiled in eternity
As erst we were beneath the shining sun

And last of all each most unhappy name
  On different marbles shall the graver mark,
And the strong love that turned our souls to flame
  Shall be put out in the unending dark;
And, kindling nought, we shall leave less behind
Than any nest wherein the birds are kind.

JEAN RICHEPIN

(1849–)

258. THE SONG OF THE GYPSY BOY

THE hawthorn blossom's white in May.
As I went by I snatched a spray.
  I took my little dirk-blade bare.
  Hi, there!
  With my blade bare
I shore the spray
  High up in air!

I wade the brook, a line to throw
For silver fish. I'll show you how
When in the sun my dirk shines bare.
Hi, there!
With my blade bare
I'll show you how
The fish to snare!

When I am tall, for gold I'll ken
To make a spear shall slaughter men,
All from this little dirk I bear.
Hi, there!
With my blade bare
I'll riddle men
From heel to hair!

When I am old, and bearded gray
For staff I'll take my hawthorn spray,
For handle this dirk-hilt I bear.
Hi, there!
With my blade bare
Shall end the spray.
Beware! Beware!

259. PROUD SONNET

THE load we bear of trouble is self-made.
Life is for fighting, and amid the rout
Of soldier, robber, traitor, murderous lout,
Hapless goes he unarmed, so fate's obeyed!
Then get you corselets that will turn the blade
Against the steel sheath of your bosom stout.
Let each forge his own armour for the bout,
And saints wear bristles lest they be waylaid.

So I may meet my murderers without dread,
I don the hair and set the mail thereon,
And dare who will to strike their felon steel!
My mail is perfect pride unconqueréd,
The hairy pelt into my flesh has grown:
You who would stab my heart, search where
you will!

260. THE SONG OF THE BEGGING CRIPPLE

WORTHY masters, worthy wives,
Holy Mary bless your lives,
Help the crippled beggar frail.
Lord above and Mary, Hail!
Spare a mite for me!

Worthy masters, worthy wives,
Charity the sinner shrives,
God for gifts shall make you hale.
Lord above and Mary, Hail!
Spare a mite for me!

Worthy masters, worthy wives,
Those unkind to broken lives
God shall smite their crops with hail.
Lord above and Mary, Hail!
Spare a mite for me!

Worthy masters, worthy wives,
Cow not calves nor woman thrives
In her labour if I rail.
Lord above and Mary, Hail!
Spare a mite for me!

Worthy masters, worthy wives,
Spare a penny each that thrives
So to buy you bliss for bale.
Lord above and Mary, Hail!
Spare a mite for me!

261. THE BEGGAR'S LOOK

THE old tramp on the prowl for bread
Looked at me and nothing said,

With his bony hand thrust out
Suddenly, nor deigned to tout

For my pity. Thankless, grim,
He took the penny offered him.

But his wolfish eyes of gray
Spake to me. I heard them say,

"Think you for a greasy brown
I will let you tread me down?

"You but show, with this mean dole
Kindness to your own poor soul.

"When you give me this round thing
'Tis yourself you're comforting.

"Sharing thus your store of pelf,
You owe thanks unto yourself.

"A penny for an old man bowed!
There's a deed to make you proud!

"Proud's the day when you with pence
Brand your brother's indigence!

"For your penny, it were fit
If I straightway spat on it.

"Though I take and keep it whole,
Think not I'll forgive the dole."

Thus his gray eyes on me set
Spake in a dumb alphabet.

I looked back as mute as he
Desperate in misery.

Then I shut my purse and strode
Like a felon down the road,

Knowing well the old man's eyes
Saw my guilt, and spake no lies.

LOUIS TIERCELIN

(1849–)

262. SUNSET AT KERAZUR

GRAY clouds, and blue clouds, and clouds all full
of roses,
To what country far away at evening do you fly,
Glancing in the twilit mirrors furtively and shy
Of gray waves, and blue waves, and waves all full
of roses?

Thus in the silence, very furtive, very shy,
All alone with you aloft far away they fly,
My gray dreams, and blue dreams, and dreams all
full of roses.

BOOK VII

TO

MAURICE HEWLETT

ARTHUR RIMBAUD

(1851–1891)

263. SENSATION

ON sunny summer evenings I shall wander down a
bridle-path,
The tall corn-blades will fondle me the while I
tramp the turf;
And dreaming, I shall feel the chilly sweetness on
my idle path,
And as a wave the wind shall lave my naked brow
like surf.

I shall not speak a word, no thought shall fill the
heart or head of me,
But love shall flow and fill my soul with its o'er-
brimming tide;
And I shall wander far away, a gipsy in the tread of
me,
As happy there with Nature fair as lover with his
bride.

GEORGES RODENBACH

(1855–1898)

264. "IN TINY TOWNSHIPS . . ."

IN tiny townships when the morning drowses
The belfries chime the time in the still haze,
Where dawn looks down with sisterly soft gaze,
The belfries chime the time above the houses.

With a pale music ere the world arouses
Each chime a drifting blossom downward strays
Over the gable-stairs of the dim houses——

As though, upgathering their misty flowers,
The wind had made a posy of sweet rhymes
That tumble downward when a belfry chimes,
In faded garlands falling in soft showers
In lilies pale of far-away lost hours
From the dead forehead of forgotten times,
With chill sweet petals, sightless, in slow showers.

265. GENTLENESS OF EVENING

GENTLENESS of evening! In the room with no lamp shining
The twilight is as gentle as a righteous life at end;
And the shadow very slowly, very slowly steals, untwining
Like a wraith of mingled smoke-wrack in the ceiling pale to blend.

All's asleep. The dusk is smiling like a righteous life at ending,
And in the clouded mirror with a wave and farewell smile,
It seems as though you saw your own shy spirit slowly blending—
That there in part you waned away and died a little while.

JEAN MOREAS

(1856–1910)

266. A YOUNG GIRL'S SONG

THE fennels said, "He is so fond,
You hold his foolish heart in bond;
Make ready for his home-coming."
The fennels tell a guilesome thing.
(May God have pity on my soul!)

The daisies said, "O! prithee say
Why did you give your heart away
For his that's old in trespassing?"
Too late, too late your questioning.
(May God have pity on my soul!)

The sages said, "Wait not your swain
Who long in other arms hath lain."
O Sages, your ill-boding leaf
I'll braid about my brow for grief.
(May God have pity on my soul!)

267. ELEGY

MORE deep than darts from Turkish strings
Love's wanton archery doth hurt
To rustic lads and royal kings.

For such a sloth of limbs inert
God had left David's body rent
Who ever held his loins girt.

Like Solomon grown indolent
Who erst a prophet greatly wise
Was at the last of glory shent.

Sly mouth and visage, with soft eyes
That hide fine snares of shamefulness
And a foul grave whence none arise:

Ev'n Agamemnon knew such stress;
When Menelaus wild Helen saw
Likewise did he grow comfortless.

Polyxen did Achilles awe;
For Omphale did Hercules
The soft wool round the distaff draw.

So Delecus for Stratonice
Became a slave; of Cressid fond
Did Troilus forget all ease.

Unto a swarthy visage bond
Brave Antony his blade let rust
And heard no more the trumpet sound.

Prudent in all save his own lust,
Aurelius for his Faustine fair
Did trail his laurels in the dust.

So am I held by her whose hair
Is fairer than is gold spun fine.
(Alas! the hard heart she doth bear),

So hapless is this love of mine,
No more can my weak breath be blown
To swell with song the reed divine

Once filled all France with my renown.

268. "CAST DOWN THESE LILIES . . ."

CAST down these lilies and these roses flaring,
Let flutes fall dumb and all the voices sigh
That fain would swell for me the flood ensnaring
Of my desires that on the skyline die.

No more upon me thy sweet breath be pouring,
Fix not on me the splendour of thy gaze,
For I am burning like a moth upsoaring
Amid the furnace of the stars' hot rays.

Tempt me no more with thy caresses clinging,
Withhold the kindling wine of thy hot breath
From thy mouth's amphora for ever springing;
Let my heart slumber, let my heart find death.

My heart is still as one in coffin wasted,
In all the silence of its new-found ease;
With idle sorrow for a boon untasted,
Mar not the quiet of its pardoned peace.

HENRI-CHARLES READ

(1857–1876)

269. "I THINK THAT GOD . . ."

I THINK that God when He did mould
My being, with intent to spare,
Gave me a heart already old
Ere I drew air.

And thriftily He set to beat
Within my breast a heart outworn,
That in old life had known defeat
Ere I was born.

It hath survived a hundred fights,
And bears a thousand wounds unhealed,
But the fell arm, the blade that smites
Are still concealed.

A hundred passions throbbing once
In bygone ages move its will;
Dead flames, dead dreams, dead sunken suns
Can stir it still.

Still burning with bequeathéd fire
For shapely women perfuméd
With sweetness of all wild desire
Of love long dead.

O torment of most nether hell!
O bitterness of burning doom!
To ache with love unquenchable,
Nor know for whom.

EDMOND HARAUCOURT

(1857–)

270. THE LOVELIEST VERSES

THE loveliest verses are those that we never can write,
They are blossoms of dream whose odour the soul respires,

Or smiles of a phantom, or sparks from eternal fires,
Or voices borne up from the plain to the mountain height.

All space is haunted with poems thro' viewless ways,
A forbidden country, an Eden's inviolate plot
Where the sin of the art of the singer may trespass not;
Yet there if thou lovest me well thine eyes may gaze.

Some eve when the fervour of love shall our souls unite,
In silence—a silence that swoons in the twilit air,
Come, lean thy soul o'er my soul, and read thou there
The verses I heard, I heard, but could never write.

AUGUSTE GAUD

(1857–)

271. THE SONG OF THE RAIN

I HAVE drunk of rains that drench
The holly-boughs' dark blind.
I love a comely wench
Whose eyes are kind.

I have drunk of dews that drown
The heart of lilies frail.
The bridal bliss hath flown:
O curlews wail!

I have drunk of rills that go
  Glad-singing thro' the grass.
Farewell gold hair, and O!
  Farewell my lass!

Within my vines' own leaves
  I have drunk the sun's red blood.
My heart no longer grieves:
  Ah, sleep is good!

All Life and Love's a snare.
  I have drunk the drops of cloud
Beneath the turret where
  They weep aloud.

ALBERT SAMAIN

(1858–1900)

272. "THERE SOMETIMES COME STRANGE EVENINGS . . ."

THERE sometimes come strange evenings when the flowers' souls awaken,
  When the languid air seems filled with rue for footsteps gone astray,
When our hearts, however secret, are by heavy waves o'ertaken
  That slowly reach the lips in sighs and ebb their life away.
It is on these strange evenings when the flowers' souls awaken
  That forth I fare as tenderly as any woman may.

There sometimes come clear mornings to a crown of roses climbing
When the soul leaps out with joy like living water from the wild,
When the heart is like a heaven full of Easter bells a-chiming
And the flesh again is spotless and the spirit undefiled.
It is on these clear mornings to a crown of roses climbing
That forth I fare as joyously as any happy child.

There sometimes come dark mornings when the heart of self o'ersated,
Feels the pains of oldest age and with its spoil would fain retire,
When the past seems like a faded scene whereon there moves belated,
A pitiful old mummer mouthing shameful things and dire.
It is on these dark mornings, with the load of self o'er-weighted,
That forth I fare as bowed of gait as any grey-haired sire.

There are sometimes nights of doubting when the cruel anguish rends you,
When adown the slowly winding stair the tortured soul is led,
When, all unforeseen, the final turn o'er vacancy suspends you,
And the spirit quails before the pit and turns away in dread.
It is on nights of doubting when the cruel anguish rends you,
That forth I fare in darkness like a spirit from the dead.

273. AUTUMN

SLOWLY we go with the old dog close behind us,
Tread once again on the road too well we know.
Red thro' the leafy aisle the dying sunbeams filter;
Dark on the farther sky the grieving women go.
As on some cloister garth, green and cell-surrounded,
Still is the air with a sadness self-indrawn;
Each golden leaf over-ripened flutters downward
Like a phantom memory, slow-falling on the lawn.

Silence walks between. . . . Hearts that furtively are scheming,
Weary of their wayfaring and ripe for new emprise,
Brood on their secret hopes of sighting the old haven
Whence they set sail with the morning in their eyes.
But all the woods to-night are so fulfilled of sorrow
That ev'n our hearts are moved to lay all self aside;
Soft are our stifled words that whisper in the twilight
Of dead illusions as of children that have died.

274. A VIOL'S PLAINT

MY heart that dreads what time may bring,
Lies in thy hands a bird-like thing
That flutters wild with fear of thee.

So shy is he, so loth to lie,
Let thy words too be low and shy,
If thou wilt hold him trustfully.

A single word will make him grieve,
A look alone will make him heave
With bitter anguish of despair.

For at the words thy sweet mouth saith
He feels the flight of thy soft breath
And trembles like a plume in air.

He follows, hovering near alway,
Thee wheresoever thou dost stray
'With soft smooth throat and trailing gown,

So furtive in his flight and swift,
So fickle are the wings that lift,
Thou touchest him and he is flown.

And when this nearness thou shalt flout
Until he bleed and life ebb out,
Thou shalt know nothing of his pain;

So slight the touch, thou shalt not heed
How on a night his heart did bleed
And on thy soft glove left a stain.

275. CLEOPATRA

DEEP night hangs heavily on Nilos' stream.
Under the burning starlight, She, grown pale
Drives off her handmaidens, and of the veil
With a wide shameless gesture rends the seam,
Flaunting her love-filled body in wild bliss
On the high terrace like a rounded grape
Swollen to ripeness; and her naked shape
Writhes like a serpent in the warm air's kiss.

Her wild eyes shoot out lightnings. She hath willed
The world with her sweet perfume shall be filled. . . .
Dark flower of sex on the night's vastness shaking!
The Sphinx unmoving on the insensate sand,
Glows thro' his granite like a burning brand,
And feels the unending desert round him quaking.

276. VIGIL

TO muse. In the void of night to thrill like the
rushes! . . .
To be as a flame, pure, subtle, and quick with light;
And, breathing the air of the hovering Thought
angelic,
Beware, as a God's, of our mortal brows grown
To spur heroic blood into noble action; [bright.
To spurn ignoble gauds, and the tinsel snare;
To put on pride as a coat of shining armour,
And leap from earth to the threshold of endless air!

To feel within, like a stream of the sea down-pouring,
The singing tide of the universal soul,
To hear in the heart the wings of the great archangels
Beating as Ocean beats on a hidden shoal;
To see like Solomon, girt with a royal splendour,
In pomp of gold, and perfume, and precious stones,
A life's long task bear down like the Queen of Sheba,
To greet us set like Kings on our royal thrones!

ANATOLE LE BRAZ

(1859–)

277. THE SONG OF AHÈS

I AM the Sea made Woman. My long hair
Is blown as balm upon the world's wide space.
There is no beauty on high heaven's face
Save as my eyes are mirrors to it there.

My gold flanks lull the sunbeams; my arms bear
The weary eyes to slumber. I brought grace
And sense of godhead unto man; the race
Of the first Gods rose from my bosom fair.

O man, thy Gods are deaf, thy pray'r denied.
As one that endeth all, come take my tide;
I have love's boon to give, love's balm to spill.
Leave on the wind thy wandering sail adrift.
No more, no more those weary lids shall lift
Whereon the clear sea's kisses now lie still.

CHARLES VAN LERBERGHE

(1861–1907)

278. OFFERING TO A DEAD FRIEND

I BRING these flowers, these pure white flow'rs, to you in your night,
For they are light.

To your heart that slumbers, your eyes that see not, I offer these,
For they are peace.

To your voice now faint in the mighty wind of the air you drew:
They are silence too.

MAURICE MAETERLINCK

(1862–)

279. THE SEVEN MAIDS OF ORLAMONDE

THE seven maids of Orlamonde,
Whenas the fairy lifeless lay,
The seven maids of Orlamonde
Went groping for a way.

And they have lit their seven lamps,
And opened up the turret stair,
Thrown open wide four hundred doors
And found no daylight there.

Then come they to the sounding caves,
And downward o'er the rocky floor,
And there they find a golden key
Within a lockit door.

They see the Ocean thro' the seams,
And fear of death doth fleer their wit.
Upon the lockit door they smite
But dare not open it.

GRÉGOIRE LE ROY

(1862–)

280. GRANNY SPINS

AT her wheel the old, old granny
Tells of things as old as she;
Thro' drowsy lids she seems to be
A child that spins at a toy jenny.

The flax is gold, and white's her hair.
The old crone weaves it, very slowly;
That she may hark, she bends her lowly
Over the wheel that speaks her fair.

Her right hand turns the wheel alway,
And with the left the flax is spun;
She thinks herself a little one
That turns and turns the wheel in play.

The flax she spins is tawny gold;
She sees it and it seems her hair;
And now she's dancing at the fair,
As round and round the wheel is roll'd.

'Tis smoothly now the wheel is plying,
Smooth the flax spins by above her;
Now she hears an ancient lover
Murmur how for her he's dying.

Now the wheel's last turn is done;
Empty hands before her spread:
Her love-stories like the thread
Of the flax have all been spun.

STUART MERRILL

(1863–1915)

281. EASTER SONG

MY soul's a belfry full of bells,
With warbling birds behind its bars!
I see the softly mirrored stars
That tremble in the glassy wells.

My soul's a holy place enshrin'd,
My soul's a bower all in leaf!
The little children weaned of grief
Go wafting songs a-down the wind.

My soul is full of Archangéls,
And full of star-y-pointing flight!
I hear the flail of Fates that smite
The hoarded grain with secret spells.

My soul is all a-brim with bliss,
My soul is full of Gods divine!
O Love, come bind these eyes of mine,
And lead me where thy pathway is!

282. "MY BROW IS PALE UPON THY KNEES"

MY brow is pale upon thy knees
With petals of dead roses hung;
O autumn bride, draw near my side
Or e'er thy knell be rung!

How tender is thy touch that soothes
The weary thoughts that round me cling!
Lo! crowns do shine on sires of mine—
Lift up thine eyes, and sing.

Now rock me with thy lullabies,
And sound of songs that erst were sweet
When helmed in gold those kings of old
Swooned at their ladies' feet.

And while those dead times live again
In music of thy simple chords,
They shall be swelled like horns once held
Amid the dance of swords.

And I shall think I fain would die
Amid that rose-filled robe of thine,
Too loth, alack! to win me back
The kingdom once was mine.

HENRI DE RÉGNIER

(1864–)

283. APPARITION

THE sea-hooves whiten on the far horizon.
Behold! Now they are on us. The wind flies on
These herded stallions with his whip that urges
The savage anger of stampeding surges.
Behold! This stumbles, and that one on-drifting
After his fellow, sullen, sly, and lifting
High hooves above the fallen, leaps, is riven
And falls in turn; an unseen spur is driven
Into the flanks of the mad beast that follows,
That charges neighing and fills up the hollows
With roaring wind and noise of waters steaming.
O! steeds of storm, O! foam of white manes
streaming!
I have stood to watch, 'mid bitter wind, uprightly
The unending race of sea-hooves plunging whitely,
And still I wait till one wild steed shall blunder
Out from the host, and with sheathed wings that
sunder
In showers of sea-rain to my side come fawning
A spume-flect Pegasus of Ocean's spawning.

284. THE SECRET

IF thou wouldst speak unto my grief, be wary;
Seek not to know wherefore she doth so weep,
Nor why her gaze is downcast and most chary
And ever on the flow'rless way doth keep.

To ease her pain, her silence and her sorrow,
Tempt not benumbed forgetfulness to show
The shapes of some lost love or pride or morrow
Whose visage bears the shade of long ago.

With speech of sun and trees and fountains woo her,
Of light-filled seas and shady woods at rest
Wherefrom the sky draws up the wan moon to her,
And all fair things whereby wide eyes are blest.

Tell her how in the spring the rose blooms gladly,
And gently take her two hands and so sigh:
The only memory whereof none feel sadly
Is shape and sound of beauteous things gone by.

285. EXPERIENCE

I WALKED behind two lovers, their kisses hearing,
And watched the loth withdrawal of forms shown black
On the soft-hued sky that the tender Autumn was wearing
Like the pale, pearl-gray that covers a sea-mew's back.

And while they wended, full near to the sea's wild riot
Hurling her waves where the stones of the cliff ran out,
My heart ungrudging, unbitter, knew no disquiet
Of sorrow, or strife, or a futile passion of doubt.

They wended along in their beautiful dream united,
Blent into one and tasting their life's brief boon;
They moved in the Present and I in the Past benighted,
And I knew the word that Chimera would tell them soon.

286. ODELETTE

I MIGHT have made all men aware
What Love was mine
When full noon filled the air
With warm sunshine
From summer's red gold that such joy doth distil
That his laughter sounds shrill
As one drunken with wine.

I might have cried out:
My Love is all gladness, behold
The mantle of purple that down to his feet
About him doth fold!
His hands are replete
With roses a-flutter that scatter their sweet;
The sky hath no cloud
Above his warm dwelling of marble that seems
As a blue-veinéd flesh in its whiteness
Most smooth to the mouth. . . .

'Tis otherwise:
I dress him in a homespun pleat,
His mantle drags about his feet;
There hardly lies

A smile about his lips as he doth fleet,
And when he sings it is an air
So dim that no man turns to hear
Nor gather up his song-bud blown
That fills the twilight full of scent;
He hath not garden, roof or tent,
But wears in truth a beggar's wear
Lest all his wealth of love be known.

287. ON THE STRAND

LIE on the sand and thro' thy fingers drain
Sieve-like the pale sea's silting grain by grain,
The lovely sand the sunlight turns to gold;
Then, ere thou drop thy lids, again behold
The sea harmonious and the stainless sky,
And when thou hearest thro' thy fingers sigh
The last light grain of silted sand out-flown
Ere thou uplift thy lids, think how thine own
Brief life is but a handful of blown sand
To fall and mingle on the eternal strand.

FRANCIS VIELÉ-GRIFFIN

(1864–)

288. SONG

IN my hands I have taken the rain that fell,—
The drops that are warm as are tears that rain;
I have drunk of the draught as a witch's spell
For rueful bane,
That so my soul in your soul should dwell.

I have taken the seed from the granary shed—
The seed that scatters like hailstones lost;
I have sown in the furrows all hardenéd
With morning frost,
That so your mouth should not lack for bread.

I have taken the grasses and leaves that fade—
The leaves and grasses whose life is spent;
Of these a smooth high flame have I made
And redolent,
To cheer your vigil of dawn delayed.

With your laughing eyes and your glossy hair,
The shame of your face and your mouth's red rim,
I have made a bewildering dawn to flare
With beams of joy and a harp's loud hymn . . .
And the day as a hive hums thro' the air!

ANDRÉ FONTAINAS

(1865–)

289. SONNET

SEA-ROAD a-tremble where the dawnlight swoons
On far-off ocean, shall we find at dark
Our ships that prop the blue sidereal arc
Have come to land beside thy loud lagoons?
City of flowers and victory whose runes
Speak never of man's sorrow, but still hark
The mirth of happy sea-folk, whose priests mark
With pure libation nought but happy moons!

Keep thou life's pride and love's, the gentle light
Of thine unsullied musing. With proud gaze
Confront the sea, the citadel. Behold
The sombre masts that shadow the sea's might,
The loud wind's threat to thy fair garden ways,
And ware the cloud wherefrom the thunder's roll'd.

ANDRÉ-FERDINAND HÉROLD

(1865–)

290. SONNET

BELOVÉD, all the dust has turned to flower,
The frolic Centaurs like spurred cavalry
Charge on; the ships, sail sunward, quit the quay
Where winter through they shrank from the sea's power.
Now are the temple columns made a tower
Of trailing roses and convolvuli;
And Dryads from each happy forest tree
Hold smooth white hands out in the glad green bower.

Come! for the ways with flowers are aflame.
The lily's white, the poppy's hue of shame,
Or the blue violet wilt thou cull for pledge?
Now hill and vale in joyousness conspire.
Come! wander on the wide green meadow's edge
That Eros fondles with a breath like fire.

291. SONNET

NOW with the black grape's blood the barrels flow,
And happy songs rise to the welkin's height
From vine-dressérs whose gladness seems a slight
To forest boughs made voluble with woe.

Sere leaves and unconsoléd murmur "Lo!
Autumn on branch and tree-bole like a blight,
While men, in our dire misery's despite,
About their toil with heartless singing go.

"You laugh, poor simple churls, that have no mind
For Winter stark swift-striding down the wind,
The slayer of the leaves. Poor fools that sing,
And hail Death's coming!" But still loud and clear
Sound the glad carols of the vintaging
Above the drowsy avenues and drear.

ROBERT D'HUMIÈRES

(1868–1915)

292. THE SONG OF THE FIGURE-HEAD

I AM Young Adventure's Lover and I vaunt
In spousal chorus to the salt sea's surge
Thee Son of Flesh and Spirit will I urge
To unwind the girdle the horizons flaunt.
Not horror nor the lightning's lash can daunt
The never-swerving brows that bear their scourge,
Though the masts groan aghast. The Future's verge
Calls to me and the unfathomed waters chaunt.

The cordage creaks, and craven is the hull;
The tree dreams of the land in every lull:
Aloof, sublime, entranced, to the wide sky
I lift a gaze no mirages can quell
And lips deep-carven with the unquenchable
Immortal thirsting for infinity.

PAUL FORT

(1872–)

293. "THIS GIRL IS DEAD"

ALL in the middle of her mirth this merry girl is dead.
They laid her when the light was dim in cold earth for a bed.
They laid her in her finery and all unhusbanded.
They laid her all unhusbanded locked tight within her bier.
Then back they came all merry when the sun was overhead.
With voices brave they sang a stave: we die or maid or wed.
"All in the middle of her mirth this merry girl is dead."
So back again into the fields to toil for daily bread.

294. "WHAT JOY WHEN FLUTE AND VIOLIN . . ."

WHAT joy when flute and violin make hearts leap high with their sweet sound! Now boys and girls run out and in, and all the old folk gather round.

Hurray! all gay with raiment glad, now quickly, quickly let us wed, and make a pair of lass and lad!

What joy when in the church we pass, whereto the loud bells summon all—three hundred bells for the bonny lass, and one big bass for the bridegroom tall.

Hurray! all gay with raiment glad, now quickly, quickly let us wed, and make a pair of lass and lad!

The bell now makes us silent all. Alas! 'tis not for us it chimes. . . . Now old folk, let your tears down fall. Perchance 'twill ring for you betimes.

Hurray! all gay with raiment glad, now quickly, quickly let us wed, and make a pair of lass and lad!

And now the bell will no more call. Then dance to bring them joyous hours. Long life to lad and lass and all! Ah! happy we it is not ours.

Hurray! all gay with raiment glad, now quickly, quickly let us wed, and make a pair of lass and lad!

What joy when flute and violin make agéd limbs again seem lithe! Now boys and girls run out and in. What mirth is born of music blithe!

HENRY BATAILLE

(1872–)

295. EVENTIMES

THE hamlets die in the long eventimes,
When drowsy doves into their cotes retire
They die as gently as the belfry-chimes
Or the blue stir of swallows round the spire. . . .

Then as in vigil all the windows blaze,
  Spent flickering flames of vestal sisters stray
With lantern-lights that hover in the haze. . . .
  The long grey road unwinds itself away. . . .
The flowers in the gardens shrink forlorn
  To hear the dying hamlet leave the day,
For well they love the land where they were born. . . .
  Now all grows dark, the old walls wane away
As soft as souls of agéd crones out-worn.

ANDRÉ RIVOIRE

(1872–)

296. "PALE AND SLOW, IN HER SUMMER'S VESTURE SO PALE"

PALE and slow, in her summer's vesture so pale,
  So slow in her langour, ah! very pale and slow,
Wending along with a sorrow that will not wail,
  Blind sky above and the scentless meadows below.

And lo! in her heart, borne down by a load too dire,
  The sound of a horn's farewell more loud than her grief. . . .
Ah! thus to pass away and to win for pyre
  A space heaped high with the rain of the yellow leaf!

Ah! thus to die, to rest where the gold leaves rest,
  In the tender reluctance of air that the autumn brings,
To hear the sob of the comfortless wind. Far west
  To welcome the falling dusk and the folding wings!

CAMILLE MAUCLAIR

(1872–)

297. THE GARTH

THE weary leafage wanes
Along the waterway, along the copse;
The forest feels the rain's
Light-glancing drops.

The grey cloud sleeps above the close,
The vine is mirrored where the water flows,
The wind is calm, the drops slow-drawn
From topmost leaf to leaf aground
At last fall gently to the lawn
With scarce a sound.

On the horizon the last light delays,
All things fade out in the autumnal haze,
The laggard twilight hearkens to the streams,
The ruddy garth with sleep is now fulfilled,
Hard by a window gleams . . .
The night of God will soon have all things stilled.

O influence of the rainfall and the hours
On nature and upon my soul this night,
On all my yearning to be calm this night!

To calm forgetfulness all things are led,
Wane out in sleep that comes to them at will.
Not ev'n the forest's self shows any dread:
I only slumberless behold them still,
Their mild consentment in the day's demise,
A child indeed, and with a child's wide eyes. . . .

298. QUESTIONING

DO souls grow ripe and wither too
As leaves and lovely women do ?—
  Aye, surely, child, it must be so.

And doth the heart forget as well
The wounds once deemed unstanchable ?—
  My child, my child, God wills it so.

And can forgiveness still be borne
In loving hearts once left forlorn ?—
  Perchance, my child, it may be so.

Shall we behold ourselves anon
The very body joy puts on ?
  Nay, child, it never may be so.

FERNAND GREGH

(1873–)

299. "I HAVE GRIEVED TOO MUCH . . ."

I HAVE grieved too much erewhile for fleeting pain,
  And now my griefs I may not recognize.
  'Tis well they spake to me in furtive sighs,
And called to me with their light voices fain;
  For them no more the tears will fill my eyes.

My sorrows now are unknown souls to me,
Wayfarers who were loved perchance of yore
Whom now no more I wait for patiently,
They pass me by and know me now no more:
Too late, too late; their souls have shut the door. . . .

CHARLES GUÉRIN

(1873–1907)

300. OUT OF THE DEEP

AT the hour when the stars from the eastern spaces are peering,
I stood on the cliffs that look on the sea, and strode
Alone and laughing with pride in the squall's careering
To feel my blood leap up at the tempest's goad.

At the base of the cliffs there was thunder of waves defeated;
I measured the spaces of western sky whereon
A sunbeam flamed farewell as the sun retreated
And over the waters its waning glory shone.

I leant by a rocky wall smooth-hewn and salted
By the immemorial sprays of the endless tide,
Like a cross on the brink of a lonely pit, exalted
I clasped all space as I held my arms out wide.

And my full heart beat with the heart of the world's
wide bosom,
The sea's salt out of the sea my strong veins drew;
I felt my body within me grow quick and blossom
With seed of stars that the winnowing night let
through.

I wanted to moan more loud than the ocean thunders,
To breathe out my being in air like the tempest
wrack;
And, death o'er-leapt, feel the sacred ardour that
sunders
The soul from self that again unto God goes back.

NOTES

NOTES

1. I have attempted the idiom of "The Twa Corbies" and its kindred lays, considering it most suited in character, though not wholly in time, to this folk ballad of the old French. The original may be found in Professor Legouis' admirable (and unanswerable) "Défense de la poésie française à l'usage des lecteurs anglais" (Constable). *Skeel* is old Scots for *pail*.

2. A fragment only of the whole.

3. A fragment only of the whole. Of JEHANNOT DE LESCUREL (Johnny of the Squirrel) nothing but this nickname is known. Perhaps he was wont to sing for his supper at a tavern bearing this sign.

JEAN FROISSART (p. 38). Selfsame with the Chronicler, a rôle in which he shines with a braver lustre.

EUSTACHE DESCHAMPS (p. 39) was poet, traveller, and man-at-arms. He seems to have met Chaucer, to whom he addressed a ballade with the refrain "Grant translateur, noble Geffroy Chaucier," thus reminding us who first brought the laurel sapling to these isles, and whence he cut the shoot.

10. This is rendered from the version given in "Chansons du XVe Siècle," collected by Gaston Paris; but it is probably of much earlier origin.

16. I have condensed the seventeen lines of the original into thirteen, the number common to the Duke's other rondeaux here rendered. Neither *flagon* nor *wench* will be found in the original, but everything which implies them.

20. The Greater Testament maintains the octosyllabic lines throughout, the variation here being due to the translator alone. *Last stanza, last line, last word.* Let pedants rail! I believe that an English Villon would have abhorred the *I* of the purist, as firmly as I believe that good writers of English have too often been dragged askew by the perfervid zeal of Latinist grammarians.

22. Villon escaped, not for the first time; but how, when, or where he died is unknown.

23. The fine version by the late Mr. John Payne attributes the hard stroke of the *ninth line* to Death; but as the original text gives no warrant for this, it seems to me likelier that Villon had in mind the outlawry and disciplinary pains which he endured

in this life. The *fourth line* seems to suggest that the "prison-crop" was already known in his day.

24. The original is in sonnet form; and I have endowed with incalculable wit the lady whom Saint-Gelais rallied for uncounted whimsies.

MARGUERITE DE NAVARRE (p. 56). Sister of Francis I, married Henri of Navarre. She was a witty woman who wrote verse and prose, was highly esteemed by Erasmus and beloved by the grateful Marot, whom she protected.

CLÉMENT MAROT (p. 56). Owing to his Protestantism he sought refuge at Geneva, but was driven thence for his ill behaviour. He died in penury at Turin.

26. *Third line.* The second-named was probably Bonaventure Despériers, another writer of the Protestant fold whom Marguerite of Navarre befriended.

CHRISTOPHE PLANTIN (p. 59) was a famous printer who emigrated from Tours to Antwerp in 1549, his Alcala polyglot being his masterpiece. The Musée Plantin at Antwerp contains the actual press with which he printed the original of this sonnet, and copies are still printed there and sold to visitors, in the form of post-card souvenirs, for the sum of one penny.

PONTUS DE TYARD (p. 63). The eldest of the Pléiade, and probably the least talented.

PIERRE DE RONSARD (p. 63). His ancestor came from Rumania and fought for Philippe of Valois against the English, nearly two centuries before the poet was born at the Château of Poissonnière, built from the royal bounty awarded him for his services in war. Ronsard became page to the Dauphin François; and, at twelve years of age, on the marriage of his master's sister to King James V of Scotland, accompanied her to her new home, and spent two years in Edinburgh before returning to France. He had visited Flanders, Holland, Germany, and Italy on various diplomatic missions before he was sixteen. Thenceforward, as the result of a severe illness, he was deaf. For the influence of the Pléiade on English poetry see "The French Renaissance in England," by Sidney Lee (Clarendon Press), and "The French Influence in English Literature," by A. H. Upham (Columbia University Press). The best appreciations are to be found in "Ronsard and la Pléiade," by George Wyndham (Macmillan), and "Avril," by Hilaire Belloc (Duckworth).

38. Written for his third and last-sung love Hélène de Surgères, a maid-of-honour to the Queen-mother, Catherine de Médicis.

39. Ronsard's first love, of whom we know hardly more than her name—Mademoiselle du Pré.

40. This sonnet of Ronsard is a close imitation of one by Petrarch.

42. Written of his second love, Marie du Pin, who died a maid.

43. The original has seven more stanzas.

44. This sonnet of Du Bellay is closely imitated from one by Daniello.

47. The Berecynthian is Cybele, the goddess of Fecundity, one of the Titan dynasty and a great producer of gods. Festivals in her honour were held on Mount Berecynthus by the Phrygians, to whom she was especially dear.

50. This was Du Bellay's version from the Latin of Navagero, a Venetian (1483–1529).

LOUISE LABÉ (p. 78) was one of the learned ladies of Lyons, where the influence of Petrarch was then predominant, it being on the main road between France and Italy and a frequent halting-place for those going to or from Rome. It was thus that she met OLIVIER DE MAGNY (p. 83) and conceived the ardent passion which so many of her sonnets celebrate.

REMI BELLEAU (p. 80) travelled in Italy and translated Anacreon. Next to Du Bellay, was probably the closest of Ronsard's friends.

ESTIENNE PASQUIER (p. 83) is notable as the author of "Recherches sur la France," a most important contribution to the literary history of the sixteenth century.

ESTIENNE JODELLE (p. 84) was chiefly known during his lifetime as an author of tragedies. His "Cléopâtre" was given before Henri II, with Belleau and Jodelle himself among the players. Ronsard and his friends afterwards offered him a goat garlanded with ivy after the antique fashion, and this innocent frolic became the ground of a charge of paganism and sacrilege which embittered the old age of the erstwhile lover of Cassandra, Marie, and Hélène.

58. *Eighth line.* I have put in *barque* and *sheep*, which all the preceding images suggest, but which Jodelle does not cite by name.

JEAN-ANTOINE DE BAÏF (p. 85) was born at Venice during one of the diplomatic missions undertaken by his father, in whose company Ronsard was afterwards to visit the German States.

GUY DE TOURS and JEAN DOUBLET (p. 87). Nothing seems to be known of these two poets save that the latter was born at Dieppe and that his verses were published in 1559.

JEAN PASSERAT (p. 88) is said to have been as skilled in Greek and Latin verse as he was in French. He was professor of eloquence in the Collège de France, and wrote the Latin inscription which may still be read on the clock of the Palais de Justice at Paris.

64. Addressed to Henri III. *Ninth line.* "La teste verte" is a French equivalent for our "hare-brained"; but I have been

loth to sacrifice the verbal antithesis of the original, and am sorry that no ingenuity can preserve in English the "sonnet" and "sonnettes" of the *eleventh line.*

GUILLAUME DU BARTAS (p. 92) wrote a long and wearisome epic of the Creation which was translated into English by Joshua Sylvester within ten years of its author's death. His fame is now deservedly rescued from oblivion by this one sonnet.

PHILIPPE DESPORTES (p. 93) was born at Chartres and started life as a lawyer's clerk, losing his place for making love to his master's wife. He then, by good luck, fell in with the retinue of Charles IX and his lady, Catherine de Médicis, but, failing to win a footing there, took hire as secretary to the Bishop of Puy, whom he accompanied to Italy. He found time during his travels for the study of Petrarch, Bembo, and the lesser rhymers, whom he freely adapted. Returning to Paris, he obtained the patronage of the Duke of Anjou, on whose succession to the French throne he fell on smooth days and became the richest abbot in all France.

69. Appears to be adapted from the well-known epigram by Leonidas of Tarentum, No. IV, Section VI, in Mackail's "Select Epigrams from the Greek Anthology." A Latin poem by Navagero, the Venetian scholar mentioned above, is also very like it, and perhaps served as model.

70. A good example of Petrarch transferred.

THÉODORE-AGRIPPA D'AUBIGNÉ (p. 95) was a redoubtable Protestant continually at war both with sword and pen. He was four times condemned to death, but escaped, to die peacefully at the verge of fourscore. His "Tragiques" give the history of the religious wars of the latter half of the sixteenth century in which he took an active part, and, like Ronsard's "Discours" but from the opposite camp, anticipate the "Châtiments" of Hugo in their thunderous eloquence of invective.

72. Henri IV, whose abjuration of Protestantism he never forgave.

FRANÇOIS DE MALHERBE (p. 99) was the god of poetic idolatry during the whole of the seventeenth century, and even later. He was well dubbed by Mlle de Gournay "docteur en négative," for his influence on poetry was no more than that of grammatical corrector and codifier. Critic, analyst, classifier, but not creator, his importance is mainly linguistic, and he certainly left behind him sharper and surer tools of expression than he had found.

73. The first seven and the last three stanzas of the very famous original, thus following the practice of French anthologists.

74. This was his last surviving child; but in spite of Malherbe's righteous ire, he seems to have been killed in a duel fairly fought.

MADEMOISELLE DE GOURNAY (p. 101) was the adopted daughter of Montaigne, and a staunch upholder of Ronsard against the onslaughts of Malherbe.

MATHURIN REGNIER (p. 101) wrote brilliant satires and was well called by De Musset "De l'immortal Molière immortal devancier." He married a daughter of Desportes. Though belonging both by chronology and his own practice to the classical school, he laughed at the pretensions of Malherbe, of whose essential prosiness he was well aware.

76. The first five of eight stanzas.

84. I have not been able to discover to whom this was addressed. "Your Spanish heart" (*line eight*) possibly means "your treacherous heart," there being a long-smouldering feud with the neighbouring State, and *Spanish* being therefore at that time a term of strong misfavour.

PIERRE CORNEILLE (p. 108) was the father of French poetical drama. The "Marquise" was Mlle Duparc, a comedienne whom Corneille courted when well past his meridian.

PAUL SCARRON (p. 110) was famous during his lifetime as a burlesque-writer. He married the granddaughter of D'Aubigné, who afterwards became famous as Mme de Maintenon. He passed the greater part of his life paralysed and racked by rheumatism.

JEAN DE LA FONTAINE (p. 111) spent a life of gentlemanly dawdling and philandering till nigh forty, when the exhaustion of his patrimony drove him to seek the favours of the great by his pen.

88. Adapted, like most of La Fontaine's fables, from Æsop.

89. This is one of La Fontaine's own invention, and the Levantine legend—a legend.

92. *Line seven.* "Martin" is—or was—a French nickname for a whip.

PHILIPPE QUINAULT (p. 116) wrote the libretti for Lulli's operas.

96. A fragment from a much longer piece.

98. A fragment from the conclusion of "Circe."

99. Mme Lullin was a centenarian of Geneva.

100. Grétry is, perhaps, the most celebrated musician among the Liégeois. His statue still stands (I hope) in front of the municipal Opera House of his native city.

102. Fréron was one of Voltaire's most bitter opponents.

JEAN-FRANÇOIS DUCIS (p. 123) was one of the first to adapt Shakespeare for the French stage. He greatly admired Garrick.

112. Written in the prison of Saint-Lazare where Chénier passed the last months of his life, leaving it only to mount the scaffold. Happily for us, the poet's sympathies were deceived. The fair unknown was the Duchesse de Fleury, an adept at amorous intrigue, who escaped the scaffold to continue her adventures.

MARIE-JOSEPH CHÉNIER (p. 129), a younger brother of André.

113. The first, third, fifth, and sixth stanzas of the fourteen addressed to the "Supreme Being."

ANTOINE-VINCENT ARNAULT (p. 130) wrote tragedies, which are now entirely forgotten, though he had a vogue under the first Empire. He suffered exile on the fall of Napoleon; and the "thunder" of these lines is generally interpreted as symbolizing the blow which fell on him from the new regime.

PIERRE-JEAN DE BÉRANGER (p. 133). The enormous vogue enjoyed by Béranger during his lifetime can only be explained by the topical character of his pieces, which have often a political bearing. His place in French literature is somewhat analogous to that of Dibdin in ours, though the Frenchman has a nimbler talent and a wider range—and other good men wrote him tunes and gave him a wide currency.

120. A fragment from the last section of "La Vigne et la Maison."

124. These few lines are the prelude to the narrative poem "La Neige," telling how White Emma, Princess of Old Gaul, fell in love with a page.

125. Fifteen stanzas from a total of forty-eight.

126. The opening section only of Vigny's masterpiece, "Le Cor," a signpost on the highway of the romantic revival, and written before the "Chanson de Roland" had received the attention which followed on the recovery at the Bodleian in 1837 of the complete manuscript. *Second line, third stanza.* The three chief heights of Marboré, enclosing a natural amphitheatre, are each over three thousand metres high. *Last line.* Roland was one of the twelve peers of Charlemagne, and perished at Roncevaux while covering the retreat of the Emperor's main army. For an excellent summary of Vigny's achievement see "French Profiles," by Edmund Gosse.

134. *First line,* "the Florentine," i.e. Petrarch, as the original says.

136. Written on September 3, 1847, of his daughter Léopoldine, drowned with her husband after but three months of marriage. Hugo set out as foretold, and the next day wrote his deathless monody "À Villequier," on the fourth anniversary of the calamity.

137. These lines appear as a prelude to "Les Châtiments," and the "tyrant" is, of course, Napoleon III.

141. The first five of eleven stanzas, the later ones losing somewhat their character of an impersonal apostrophe and appearing as an address on private and particular troubles to his unwedded spouse, Juliette Drouet.

143. *Last line.* The original has "le chardon des sables." Probably the sea-holly is intended.

144. Represents fourteen lines from Section VI of "Les Sept Merveilles du Monde," in the "Légende des Siècles." I am doubtful of the propriety of this recasting in a form which Hugo never used, but could not withstand the temptation which it offered for underlining the obligations due from Hérédia to his great forerunner in historiography.

JULIEN-AUGUSTE-PELAGE BRIZEUX (p. 167) was the poet of Brittany. He wrote rustic tales mingled with a good deal of folk-lore gathered among the fishermen and tillers of his native soil.

146. This song—or, rather, something to the same effect—used to be sung by the Breton peasantry after nightfall each first of November in a district of French Cornwall near Finistère.

CHARLES-AUGUSTIN SAINTE-BEUVE (p. 170) as a poet was all things by turn and nothing long. He helped in the rehabilitation of Ronsard, and is now remembered for his effort to adapt the methods of the English Lakists to the French Muse. As a critic he was unrivalled.

149. The first sixteen of forty-eight lines.

152. Nerval's title, "Les Cydalises," is only understandable as a French form of the Greek κυδαλιμος, and I have rendered it accordingly.

155. This sonnet should be compared with De Nerval's own "Fantasy" (No. 153) and Baudelaire's "My Former Life" (No. 191), the sentiment of reincarnation being common to all three. I have left the original (Spanish) title—meaning *luckless*—unrendered. *Line two.* Perhaps Waifre, the last of the hereditary Dukes, whose losing fight for freedom is described in vol. i, chap. xiv, of "The Deserts of Southern France," by S. Baring Gould. *Line five.* Pausilippo is a lovely grotto near Naples, tradition placing Virgil's tomb in the immediate vicinity. *Line nine.* The Marquis de *Lusignan* (1753–1815), the last of an illustrious line, fled to Hamburg on the outbreak of the first Revolution, and vainly sought reinstatement as a senator under successive regimes. His ancestor Étienne de Lusignan (1537–1590), of the royal house of Cyprus, took holy orders and won high episcopal honours in both Italy and France, after his dynasty had been overthrown by the invading Turks *Biron* (1524–1592), Duke and Marshal of France, was the seven-times-wounded and never-beaten general who stormed La Rochelle during the Huguenot

troubles. Or the allusion may be to his son (1562–1602), beheaded for a treason which he refused to avow. The suggestiveness of these two names can hardly be felt by an English reader. Boadicea, Llewellyn, and Bruce might have the same evocatory power for us. The Queen of Sheba is perhaps meant in *line ten*, it being one of De Nerval's hallucinations that he was in love with this lady re-enshrined in later flesh. In Mr. Eccles's book (see note below) other—and perhaps likelier—personages are suggested; but the only thing certain is that all these names are merely used as symbols of lost glory.

156. Having arrived at the proper ending of his "Ballad," De Musset cocked a snook at his own Diana by parodying his lines in a set of lewd stanzas, which are to be found in some early editions. This is one of the boyish tricks which seem to suggest that Lamartine and De Lisle were right in regarding him "en garçon." He was always young, *au cœur de cire*.

159. This was written of the Princess Belgiojoso, one of the many lights-o'-love with whom De Musset vainly sought consolation after the rupture of his famous first liaison. The lady was not dead when he wrote it; she had merely withdrawn her favours. The *first stanza* refers to one of four recumbent figures supporting the tomb of the grandson of "Il Magnifico" in the church called of San Lorenzo at Florence.

160. From the "Nuit de Mai." I have taken the opening lines of several passages and linked them together into a single invocation, skipping the intervening descriptions.

161. This was written in 1841, after having met George Sand by chance while out walking. Six from a total of forty-five stanzas.

162. The original is in sonnet form, with octosyllabic lines.

166. I have put stars where Gautier gives no sign of a break. It seems to me that the lyric would close more effectively on the accent of wistful suspense. The rebuff of the last two stanzas is too rude; and where is the lover who would spoil his chances with a douche of such chilly wisdom?

167. Written in answer to the lines addressed to him by De Banville. See No. 204.

168. The first three of nine stanzas.

170. These lines reproduce the first, second, sixth, and seventh of the forty-one stanzas entitled "Alma Parens."

171. Three stanzas from the close of "L'Amour et La Mort."

174. Candour compels me to state that Soulary wrote of cherries and sparrows. But rhyme will not be denied.

LECONTE DE LISLE (p. 199) wrote in his preface to "Poèmes Antiques": ". . . the entire Christian cycle is barbarous.

Dante, Shakespeare, and Milton prove only the strength and reach of their individual genius; their speech and their conceptions are barbarous. . . . Modern poetry, a confused reflection of the stormy personality of Byron, the sham and sensuous religiosity of Chateaubriand, the dreamy mysticism of Over-Rhine, and the realism of the Lakists, rises in self-disturbance and wastes away." Holding such views, (and proclaiming them), it is not wonderful that his recognition was long delayed, and that the poet who in French literature is to Hugo as Milton to Shakespeare in ours should have had to wait until his sixty-eighth year for election to the Académie Française, when he was given the vacant *fauteuil* of the dead Hugo in fulfilment of the latter's expressed desire.

177. In the original the first and last lines of each stanza rhyme.

179. One of the very few poems in which Leconte de Lisle deigns to avow his tenderness. I have left his original title.

187. I am aware that my rendering of the *last line* is debatable, but "néant divin" makes poor sense in English, and in any case to De Lisle it may very well have implied the meaning I have here assumed for it.

189. This sonnet is obviously referred to by Swinburne in Stanza VI of his "Ave atque Vale" in memory of the poet. So, too, No. 191 is clearly indicated in Stanza II of the same immortal elegy.

192. Pascal, the great French philosopher, as the result of an accident suffered from the hallucination of a pit continually yawning at his feet. It is curious that Baudelaire should have translated the Tales of Poe, in one of which this horrific idea is treated. "The Influence of Baudelaire," by G. Turquet-Milnes (Constable), traces very fully his literary ancestry and descendants, though we cannot help thinking that the author credits him with too large a family, and admits into the direct line many who are no more than remote collaterals.

194. Written of the Creole mistress whom he brought back from the voyage to the tropics on which he had been sent by his bewildered parents while he was still short of his majority.

195. Written of the same. What Baudelaire may have meant by "Courtisane imparfaite" is not clear; but the misery he suffered from the continual infidelities of this coloured woman have suggested my rendering of "adulterous cheat."

HENRI MURGER (p. 220) is best known as author of the famous "Vie de Bohème," from which the story of Puccini's well-known opera is drawn.

LOUIS BOUILHET (p. 221) was at school with Flaubert.

LOUIS MÉNARD (p. 222). A convinced communist who suffered exile.

204. See Gautier's lines (No. 167) written in answer.

ANDRÉ THEURIET (p. 229) is even better known as the prose-poet of the woods and fields, amid which he always moved whether as singer or story-teller.

ARMAND SILVESTRE (p. 231). George Sand introduced his first book to the public. Of his poetry Anatole France has well said, "Il tire de la volupté physique un mysticisme exalté."

LÉON DIERX (p. 233) was, like his master Leconte de Lisle, a native of Réunion. His work, perhaps, shows more affinity with the Névrosés, who derive from Baudelaire and culminate in Samain.

211. The first eleven of a long series of lines all similarly linked together by recurring phrases.

ACHILLE MILLIEN (p. 234) is the poet of the Nivernais. He is a great linguist, and has collected and translated the folk-songs and poetry of Eastern Europe and of the Spanish peninsula.

213. In Professor Saintsbury's "French Lyrics" will be found a twelfth-century song from which this may have been derived.

218. The last two of four stanzas.

HENRI CAZALIS (p. 240) was a doctor of medicine, and published most of his books (other than medical) under the pen-name of Jean Lahor. He was deeply versed in Oriental literature, and wrote a study of William Morris.

STÉPHANE MALLARMÉ (p. 247) was professor of English in several of the lesser Universities, and finally at the Lycée Condorcet in Paris. He translated Poe's "Raven." He has been well described by Huysmans (writing from the life), in his novel "À Rebours," as "raffinant sur des pensées déjà spécieuses, les greffant de finesses byzantines, les perpetuant en des deductions légèrement indiquées que reliait à peine un imperceptible fil." 225 and 226 are versions after the two most intelligible of Mallarmé's pieces; but even here the "imperceptible fil" is none too easy to follow, and I have linked up his ellipses with threads of my own weaving. See "French Profiles," by Edmund Gosse (Heinemann), for a shrewdly humorous account of him.

JOSÉ-MARIA DE HÉRÉDIA (p. 248) was born in Cuba of Spanish blood by a French mother, and was descended from one of the most illustrious of the "Conquistadores." He gave a lifetime to the production of a single volume of one hundred and eighteen flawless sonnets. See "The Claims of French Poetry," by J. C. Bailey, and "A Century of French Poetry," by F. Y. Eccles (both Constable). Mr. Bailey appreciates well without losing his English standpoint; while the latter book is a rich mine of succinct information, and a marvel of critical analysis and clear exposition of matters by no means easy of summary assortment. Mr. Eccles understands and can feel French rhythm

and its suggestiveness in a way that few born Englishmen can ever hope to achieve, even after long study and residence beyond the straits. Mr. Gosse's "Critical Kit-Kats" (Heinemann) also gives an excellent account of Heredia's achievement.

228. Neither "willow" nor "swans" will be found in the original sestet.

231. The Ponte Vecchio at Florence. See "Florentine Vignettes" (Elkin Mathews), by the present writer, from which this version is reproduced by permission of the publisher.

CATULLE MENDÈS (p. 255) is, next to Hugo, one of the most amazing *virtuosi* among French poets. He had, perhaps, been greater but for this fatal facility of production, which too readily supplied what was required of it by the baser public of his day.

238. From "Contes Épiques." Save Hugo, Mendès has no equal in this kind. He caught from the greater master the trick of consummating his epic narrative with a quiet close, as in the famous "Donne-lui tout de même à boire, dit mon père."

239. The opening lines of the original have the very sound of the squall they speak of.

241. Written in the prison at Mons where he was converted while undergoing a sentence for his murderous attack on Arthur Rimbaud (see No. 263), the youth whose sinister fascination caused Verlaine's rupture with his wife. For biographical details see "Paul Verlaine," by the present writer (Constable), from which Nos. 241, 248, and 250 are reproduced by permission of the publishers. For his æsthetic philosophy see "The Symbolist Movement" (Constable), by Arthur Symons, than whom no writer on our side of the Channel has ever better understood the aims of his school, or more happily rendered their moods and their music.

243. Another of those pieces which were written in the prison at Mons. It has been interpreted as an appeal to his wife, but it seems likelier to be a sinner's soliloquy addressed to his better self.

251. Bitter raillery resounds in all that this author wrote. *Fourth stanza, last line.* The original has "Jardin d'Acclimatation," the last word rhyming with the "ration" of the second line's terminal. "Grub" here bears—quite accidentally—a double meaning, which accords well with the accent of tragic irony heard in the original.

GABRIEL VICAIRE (p. 268) was the poet of the Bressans, for whom he did with a lighter touch and a truer accent of the folk what Brizeux had accomplished for the Bretons forty years earlier.

AUGUSTE ANGELLIER (p. 272) was professor at the University of Lille. He wrote an important study of the life and work of Burns.

258, 259, and 260 are from "La Chanson des Gueux," mostly dealing with the life of the outcasts of the road, with whom M. Richepin passed a spell of his adventurous youth. The "Proud Sonnet" is a good example of his fondness for truculent metaphor. He was condemned to imprisonment and a heavy fine for his daring fidelity to the speech and thought "de ces aventureux, de ces hardis, de ces enfants en revolte à qui la société presque toujours fût marâtre, et, qui, ne trouvant pas de lait à la mamelle de la mauvaise nourrice, mordent à même la chair pour calmer leur faim."

LOUIS TIERCELIN (p. 277) is another of the "Poètes du Terroir." No. 262 is from "La Bretagne qui chante."

264. *Line seven.* Rodenbach was born at Tournai and passed his boyhood at Bruges and Ghent. His phrase "sur les escaliers des pignons noirs" will be well understood by those who have visited these Flemish towns.

265. The first two of five stanzas.

JEAN MORÉAS (p. 283) was a Greek and born at Athens, but settled permanently in France before he was twenty. He started his career as a thorough-going symbolist with fantastic ideas as to freedom of language, but relapsed in 1891, when he founded what he called an 'Ecole Romane," which, we fear, has left small wake in its passing. In this latter period he proposed a much-needed return "dans la pensée comme dans le style, à l'équilibre et à l'harmonie," for lack of which many of his followers bade farewell both to melody and sense. He even proposed to restore archaisms, to multiply inversions, and to encourage the invention of compound words in the manner often used—and abused—by Ronsard and Du Bartas in the sixteenth century.

267. An example of what Mr. Eccles well calls "triumphant assimilation," the original being cast in a French five hundred years old, which I have done my best to mimic in suitable English.

HENRI-CHARLES READ (p. 285). This precocious boy died of brain fever at nineteen, a fact which gives an added significance to these strangely premonitory lines. The surname is derived from the poet's great grandfather, a Scotch colonel.

ALBERT SAMAIN (p. 288) was a native of Lille and died of consumption. Perhaps these two facts may help to explain why his wistful music is so full of yearning for "an ampler ether, a diviner air." He has painted his own portrait perfectly in a single line :

"Mon âme est un velours douloureux que tout froisse."

275. The second of twin sonnets. Samain's sonnets are, architecturally, far inferior to Hérédia's; indeed several of them run over into a fifteenth line. But he paints as a lover what Hérédia views as an epicure. Even in this quasi-Parnassian work

such a line as "un adieu rose flotte au front des monuments" reveals the impressionist to whom shadow is most articulate.

276. This apotheosis of a poet's ambition, this dream of fame, follows in the original the correct sonnet form. The similes in the *fourth* and *last lines* of the second stanza are not in the original.

ANATOLE LE BRAZ (p. 292), the chief interpreter of the Breton soul in modern France. The spirit of Celtic myth and mysticism has been finely wrought by his hands into the mould of a language whose character and traditions are alien to it, and the achievement is therefore the more remarkable.

STUART MERRILL (p. 295). An American reared in France.

FRANCIS VIELÉ-GRIFFIN (p. 300). Another American whom France long ago absorbed. He has been much influenced by Swinburne.

ROBERT D'HUMIÈRES (p. 303). Died fighting for France in 1915.

294. M. Fort prints his nearly regular stanzas as prose paragraphs, and I have therefore followed his habit.

CHARLES GUÉRIN (p. 309), a link between French poetry and the Catholic tradition.

INDEX OF AUTHORS

	Page
Ackermann	196
Amfrye	118
Angellier	272
Anonymous (12th Century)	35
Anonymous (15th Century)	42
Arnault	130
Arvers	172
Baïf	85
Banville	223
Barbier	171
Bataille	305
Baudelaire	214
Belleau	80
Benserade	110
Béranger	133
Blémont	238
Bouilhet	221
Boulay-Paty	169
Boutelleau	266
Brizeux	167
Cazalis	240
Chénier (André)	125
Chénier (Marie-Joseph)	129
Coppée	255
Corbière	265
Corneille	108
D'Aubigné	95
Desbordes-Valmore	135
Deschamps (Émile)	141
Deschamps (Eustache)	39
Desportes	93
Dierx	233
D'Orléans	43
Doublet	87
Du Bartas	92
Du Bellay	73
Ducis	123
Fontainas	301
Fort	304
Fresnaye	91
Fresny	119
Froissart	38
Gaud	287
Gautier	185
Gournay	101
Gregh	308
Guérin	309
Guiot de Dijon	36
Haraucourt	286
Hérédia	248
Hérold	302
Hugo	149
Humières	303
Jodelle	84
Labé	78
La Fontaine	111
Lamartine	136
Laprade	195
Le Braz	292
Lebrun	122
Lescurel	37
Leconte de Lisle	199
Maeterlinck	294
Magny	83
Malherbe	101
Mallarmé	247
Manuel	229
Marot	56

	Page
Mauclair	307
Maynard	104
Ménard	222
Mendès	255
Merrill	295
Millien	234
Molière	115
Moréas	283
Murger	220
Musset	175
Navarre	56
Nerval	173
Parny	124
Pasquier	83
Passerat	88
Pisan	41
Plantin	59
Prudhomme	235
Quinault	116
Racine	117
Read	285
Régnier (Henri de)	297
Régnier (Mathurin)	101
Richepin	273
Rimbaud	281
Rivoire	306
Roches	95
Rodenbach	281
Ronsard	63
Rousseau	120
Roy	294
Saint-Amant	106
Sainte-Beuve	170
Saint-Gelais	55
Saint-Pavin	107
Samain	288
Scarron	110
Silvestre	231
Soulary	197
Theuriet	229
Tiercelin	277
Tours	87
Tyard	63
Van Lerberghe	293
Verlaine	258
Viau	105
Vicaire	268
Vielé-Griffin	300
Vigny	143
Villiers de l'Isle-Adam	239
Villon	48
Voiture	108
Voltaire	120

INDEX OF FIRST LINES

	Page
ACHILLES chose a meaner task when he	95
A clear night, icy wind, and blood-streams staining	201
A cloud the far horizon scales	190
A frail hand hovering sets the keys astir	264
A hunter old whom once the desert air	209
Ah! who hath not joy of chill Autumn's slow coming?	238
All finest art is seen	188
All in the middle of her mirth this merry girl is dead	304
All men this path must tread	116
All through the day down poured the traitorous flame	264
Aloft a white-robed angel I beheld	156
Along the clouds there spreads a rosy lustre	206
Along the vines the blossoms thrive	229
Among Levantine legends you maye find	112
And doth my agéd Muse forlorn	120
And must thy grief, Du Périer, knowe no end?	101
April, pryde of all the yeare	80
A rhythm can link me with melodious air	237
As daylight passes there go three lasses	234
As Laura to the Florentine	157
As one astraye within the forest deepe	84
A spring up-sparkles in the silent forest	203
As you maye see the sudden lightnynge smite	94
As you maye see upon the stem in Maye	70
At her wheel the old, old granny	294
A tremor slides from the hill-slopes down to the plains	233
At the hour when the stars from the eastern spaces are peering	309
BEHOLD the hour is come when stems are thrilled	215
Belovéd, all the dust has turned to flower	302
Be wise, my sorrow, quit thy vain unrest	219
Brave knight that to the war doth go	180
Brave strength breeds freedom, for each load we bear	222
Brook little known whose waters run	123
CALM summer eves that once did hide	266
Cast down these lilies and these roses flaring	285
Caves, and streames that downward slyde	70

	Page
Chill is the fount whose gentle streame doth carrye	94
Chisel upon thine arch, great king, a knot	249
Come, young Chromis, I love thee, and I am lovely	125
Coming with the daffodils and dying with the roses	138
DARLING little wingéd boys are clinging to our skulls	105
Deep night hangs heavily on Nilos' stream	291
Do souls grow ripe and wither too	308
ERE thy soft ray be lost	262
Eternal rest on him bestowe	54
FAIR Phyllis, more niggard than coy	119
Fayre, in loyaltie	37
Fear fled before a wily Ass that clad	114
Forest and plain are gone	239
For me the most foul demon still doth plot	218
For myne owne courage will I synge	36
For nine long months she made her mother's vows	229
For that my son hath lost his mortal shrine	100
Free-thinker! dost thou deem that only man	174
Frenchman, halt there awhyle nor leave this lande	92
Full gladlye in this month of Maye	58
GARDEN and wold by Winter's hand are gript	254
Gastibelza, gun on shoulder	153
Gentleness of evening! In the room with no lamp shining	282
Give heed unto this little lad	160
God spake and said, "Son, love me. Look and see	258
Goddess of the rosy hue	106
Great God at whose divine word of command	117
Great Pascal had his pit always in sight	216
Gray clouds, and blue clouds, and clouds all full of roses	277
HAD I but an acre of loam on hill or valley	197
Happie is he that from a faire voyáge	78
Happye the man beyonde the city's hail	83
Haul up the anchor, captain old, O Death, for it is time	219
Have you forgotten, dear Louise	220
Here fruit and flowers I bring to thee; green leaves and sprays I proffer	261
Here is thewood whereof my angel sweete	69
Here lies a toper drank more wine	104
He who underground doth slumber	110
He who with a random eye	58
His galled flesh writhing on the rock, he thrilled	232
His grace the Abbot and his servynge ladde	57

Page

How canst thou reconcile, O heavenly mayde 101
Howe comelye hath Godde made her be 45
Howe faire a destiny 'twould be 104
Howe hard a thing it is to dree 42
How sad a glance, how shrunk a face thou hast 171

I AM kind-hearted, wish no creature ill 235
I am lovely as a dream of stone. Men sicken 214
I am the dark inheritor of woe 175
I am the Sea made Woman. My long hair 292
I am Young Adventure's Lover and I vaunt 303
I bring these flowers, these pure white flow'rs, to you in your night 293
Idle Winter's colde 85
I doe bemoan my youthful sinne 50
If but your creditors, the which you chyde 56
If in this house ye lie a-bed 168
If Lyfe's full span be but a daye that's sped 73
If thou wouldst speak unto my grief, be wary 298
If thy heart, groaning under life's rude burden 144
If you think that I'll discover 184
I gazed on darkness where the pit most dread 162
I give my bodye unto her that gatte 51
I hate the Florentines' pelf-huntynge race 77
I have drunk of rains that drench 287
I have grieved too much erewhile for fleeting pain 308
I have just been robbed of papers!—I am sorry for your grief 122
I have lost my turtle fleet 89
I have noe eyes save when on her I looke 87
I knowe full well I am noe saynte 48
I know when noon drives shadowward their feet 127
I lived a life was fancy free 104
I love the sound of the horn in the deep, dim woodland 147
I might have made all men aware 299
In good plain French your words devoutly rise 108
In my hands I have taken the rain that fell 300
In tiny townships when the morning drowses 281
Into the church with pray'r go by 163
I often wonder with what blood doth beat 235
I rebehold you, O belovéd dead 139
I saw her at her window set 134
I saw in dream a fair unknown 142
I send to thee a posie gatheréd 64
I think that God when He did mould 285
I walked behind two lovers, their kisses hearing 298
I was a mite when she was tall and fair 125
I will go and drink the waters pure that feed the rolling river 195

	Page
I will set out to-morrow when the dawn-light whitens all the land	158
I would it had been mine in time remote	214
LADYE of heaven that o'er earth hath swaye	52
Lady, they will tell you, " You are foolish to believe him!	141
Let it be draped with serge or with brocade	254
Like the once lovely monster, in the tide	253
Like royal galleys be my verse here written	272
Like to a dismal brute, dust-smothered, teased	207
Lie on the sand and thro' thy fingers drain	300
Long shall he live thro' time rememberéd	210
Love be mute, but take thyne arc	91
Love comes not by trying	120
Lovely she was, if so be Night	180
MARQUISE, if on my face you spy	108
Memory, what wilt thou with me? Autumn gales	263
Meseemeth that soe manye shafts be notte	87
'Mid these hamlets and these woods	118
More deep than darts from Turkish strings	283
My bodye goes; I leave wyth thee my heart	39
My brow is pale upon thy knees	296
My dunnes who untoe dizains give smalle care	56
My heart was as a Roman palace fair	255
My heart that dreads what time may bring	290
My Manés to Clytie are crying, " Farewell, fair one!	126
My name is Light. I am seventy cubits high	167
Myne only love, my joye, my boone	45
Myrrh sweetens all their supple limbs; they muse	249
My soul doth grope, a darkened way I go	172
My soul's a belfry full of bells	295
NAY, but the world is old, nigh old as hell	211
No live girl's body hath such pride impassioned	231
Noon whose kingdom summer is, spread wide along the plain's expanse	211
Nor bloody altar, nor barbaric rite	209
Not all the shippes bye Venice quay	55
Not the wild wrath of flames that skyward shoot	74
Not seldom in my dreams a woman's eyes	260
Not sunrise that doth sette the rose a-fire	69
Now Ahod on the plain kept countless sheep	255
Nowe cometh the soe gracious month of Maye	41
Nowe that the skiey space, the solid claye	63
Now falls the dusk I sit in peace	161
Now Grave to Rose complaineth	158

Page
Now that my tasks are done, and fast 165
Now Winter turns the roadway white 163
Now with the black grape's blood the barrels flow 302

O BROTHER men that live when we have end 53
O die not yet, divine Desire, whose flight 238
O France, when thou art prone and bound 159
O! happy fleshly lips that glow 236
O hearken the so gentle plaint 259
O limp-haired Corsican! thy France was fair 171
Old herder's daughter, thou whose hands are skilled 127
Old Nilos takes the round moon's silver glance 252
O Mayde more tender yet 67
On graven chalice or on hasp of gold 250
On high Pentecost I found 39
On my return to thee (Ah me! my woe) 65
On sunny summer evenings I shall wander down a bridle-path 281
On the Moorish coast, chain-tethered 133
O pleasant wynde whose balmye breath doth fill 91
O praye for peace, sweet mayde Marie 43
O tell me where and in what lande 49
Over gray skies or shining 267

PALE and slow, in her summer's vesture so pale 305
Pale star of evening, far herald wan 179
Poet, take thy lute and kiss my mouth 182
Poor Liza died two days ago 269

QUIT thy bed and sleepe of twilight 88

RED-HANDED and with savage thews afire 248
Rise from your bed for the Spring is born this morning 221
Rosette, because I stayed awaye 93

SALUTE for me the fellowe-ship 74
Scarce on my yieldynge pillowe doe I bend 79
Sea-road a-tremble where the dawnlight swoons 301
She was a childe or hardly more 124
Silent fields where I was glad 224
Since from thy brimming chalice I have sipped 152
Since sev'n sins from these our eyes 102
Since she is frostye as the Winter aire 66
Since thyne eye so ardently ashine with love's own splendour 101
Sire, Thulène is dead. I have seen his grave 90
Sire, your dogge Lemon, once your bed-fellowe 95
Sleepe, sire of rest and eke of dreams the sire 63
Sleepe that most heavenlye of all boones is deemed 75

	Page
Sleepless upon my bed, my spirit's force	170
Slowly we go with the old dog close behind us	290
So blithe am I when I a rose doe smell	38
Some relics on a donkey being tied	113
Source of all truth, blasphemed by every liar	129
Spacious, splendid and pacific, the vast night unrolled before us	241
Stay. Light not the lamp. But let us slake	257
Still do they sing, the swarm of mocking fays	223
Still Etna bears the red wine and the gold	253
Stranger that seekest Rome in Rome, and nought	74
Strength and Life have fled afar	183
Summer's the time for soldierhood	40
TELL me, lovely girl	187
That night the loud voice of the sea was roaring	208
The Berecynthian in her chariot	75
The butterflies that are the snow's own hue	191
The fennels said, " He is so fond	283
The gorge is dark below the reeds' massed slimness	199
The Grasshopper that through the Summer heat	111
The Great Bear shone, an archipelago	237
The hamlets die in the long eventimes	305
The hawthorn blossom's white in May	273
The infant sang; the mother, life near over	156
The innumerable multitude grows more	252
The load we bear of trouble is self-made	274
The loveliest verses are those that we never can write	286
The mirk did fa' lang syne, lang syne	35
The moon grew sad, and weeping seraphim	247
The old tramp on the prowl for bread	276
The other day while in the dale our friend did fare on	122
The poet snares his prize	227
The race of men in an eternal chain	196
The sea grew silent like a seething bowl	140
The sea-hooves whiten on the far horizon	297
The seven maids of Orlamonde	294
There is an air for which I'd give all else	173
There sometimes come strange evenings when the flowers' souls awaken	288
The sickle spares the springing corn	127
The sky above the roofing lies	259
The sobs are long	262
The spent winds on the mountain slopes at peace	204
The weary leafage wanes	307
This eve I left the flocks to stray and crop the grass with no one by	167
This morning I had roses for thee found	135

Page
This morning not one beam cleaves the cloud-blind 233
This window hath seen many a dame and lord 250
Thou mayst be manly an thou wilt. Go! clench thy hilt and brave the squall 257
Thus ever drawn toward far shores uncharted 136
Thus shall we live our separate lives unknit 273
Thy sighte denied when deare to me 83
Tircis makes rhymes as fast as ticking 107
'Tis noon. Mid burning air and dreadful rays 251
To muse. In the void of night to thrill like the rushes 292
To her the dearest, the most fair 217
Toward your scented garden, Sweet 152
To you light troupe that ryde 77
Tyme hath throwne downe the robe he bare 47
'Twas a dusky night I spied 175
Two wrestlers in a ruthless grapple strive 169

UNDER her tilted hat of Tuscan rushes 198
Under vast colonnades that took the noon's 215
Up leapt the wave as a wild unbroken stallion 240

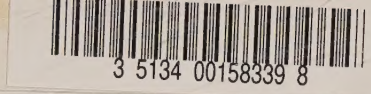
WAIF in the wind, O where 130
We are the gilders of the prows 149
Weary is the flesh, alas! with many books the eyes are dim 247
Weep on Le Vayer, make thine eyes an urn 115
We'll go no more the woodland way, the laurel-leaves are clipt 228
What doth our loves befall? 173
What evil woes dull Hate maye breede 57
What joy when flute and violin 304
What shall I doe if love me leave? 42
When barren boughs above us wave 143
When I could taste (as nowe no more maye be) 76
When I remember I am nigh to weep 126
When men do find upon a day 185
When Michael Angelo left the Sistine dome 185
When, O my dark belovéd, thou shalt drowse 218
When the long day dies in summer and flowers are closing 157
When thou art old and bye the fire alone 66
When with shut eyes in autumn twilight dim 217
When you beholde her graciousness and glory 108
Where goes the starry quire? 232
While that myne eyes with woeful teares doe flood 78
Whoe'er you are, you here your master see 122
Who hath a well-built house both clean and comelye 59
Why, O Dante, deemedst thou life's worst trial 182
Withhold thy love, though life betrays 242

	Page
Within the forest of sad wearinesse	46
Worthy masters, worthy wives	275
YESTREEN beneath the greenery	197
Yonder o'er the sea like a swallow hasting over	205
You ask me whom in dream I see?	268
You gave the youngster into my care.—He's dead	265
You have good cause to weep your fate	113
Your songs Paris honoured of late	122
You spiky gorse, you hollye thorn-beset	65

PRINTED AT
THE COMPLETE PRESS
WEST NORWOOD, LONDON

DATE DUE

#47-0108 Peel Off Pressure Sensitive


3 5134 00158339 8

PQ 1170 .E6 T5
Thorley, Wilfrid Charles,
1878-
Fleurs-de-lys

841.08 THORLEY
Fleurs-de-lys.

1D20

OREGON STATE LIBRARY
Salem

OEMCO